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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

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SECOND SESSION - FIRST MEETING

TUESDAY, 16 AUGUST 2022



IN THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

Official Report of the Proceedings of Parliament

SECOND SESSION - 18TH SITTING - FIRST MEETING

Tuesday, 16 August 2022

Parliament met at 2.30 p.m. in Parliament House, Kampala.

PRAYERS

(The Deputy Speaker, Mr Thomas Tayebwa, in the Chair.)

The House was called to order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Colleagues, I welcome you to today's sitting. I have been informed by the *Hansard* team that in order to be audible enough, I should get permission to remove my mask. That means you can only come to my bench if you have a mask. Each one of us should be having a mask. You can see the distancing I have created. In case of any doubt, you can consult Dr Kaducu – for your own benefit. *(Laughter)* Thank you.

Colleagues, I would like to join the Rt Hon. Speaker and, on your behalf, to congratulate the people of Kenya upon a successful election. *(Applause)* I also congratulate the President-elect, His Excellency William Ruto, upon being elected as the Fifth President of the Republic of Kenya. *(Applause)*

Our prayer is that anyone who is not satisfied with the outcome of the elections will, indeed, follow the legal process so that we can have peace in the region. What happens with our neighbours has a very big impact on us. So, we pray that the whole process is concluded

peacefully. That would be setting an example of how a credible election should be held. We wish them well.

I was very happy with the remarks of the president-elect when he said: "This is a win for Kenya and everyone will be included in the Government." He extended an olive branch. We pray that, that is the message, which they will welcome so that peace can prevail.

Secondly, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the Government Chief Whip, Hon. Hamson Obua, to his maiden sitting as Government Chief Whip. *(Applause)* He has been a Member of Parliament for 17 years. I am very sure that we are going to tap into his experience.

I am now glad that questions won't be coming from Hon. Nambeshe on why his number mate is missing. *(Laughter)* The checkmates – keep checking on each other. Build on the good rapport. You have both been colleagues in the House.

I do not have any inch of doubt in hon. Obua. I am very sure that he is going to raise the bar extremely high and that would be to the benefit of this House in general. *(Applause)* When we have high-calibre individuals in positions of responsibility, then, we benefit as a House.

Colleagues, with that, allow me to call upon hon. Obua – since this is your maiden appearance in the House as the Government Chief Whip, you might be having some words of wisdom to share with colleagues. *(Applause)*

2.34

THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Hamson Obua): Thank you, Mr Speaker. For all intent and purposes this is, just like you have stated, my maiden speech as the Government Chief Whip of the Republic of Uganda. I have been away in my other earlier assignment as the Minister of State for Education and Sports (Sports), as the leader of delegation for team Uganda to the World Athletics Championship, Oregon and the Commonwealth Games, 2022. My appointment came while I was out with team Uganda.

First and foremost, permit me to thank His Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda, Gen. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, who appointed me two years and seven months ago as the Minister of State for Education and Sports (Sports). I also want to pay tribute to him for the recent appointment, on elevation, to the office of the Government Chief Whip. *(Applause)*

Mr Speaker, I am here to learn, serve, work with Parliament and work with my party and the Executive arm of Government.

I would like to commit that as Government Chief Whip, I will work with Parliament. The two presiding officers – the Rt Hon. Speaker and the Rt Hon. Deputy Speaker – I will work with your respective offices. I will work with the right hand side of Government, that is, the NRM side where I chair the parliamentary caucus; and I also commit to working together with the office of the Leader of the Opposition and even Members of the Opposition, because Uganda is our country. *(Applause)* We do not have a second choice country.

Members of the Independents, I am here for us to work together. *(Applause)* The UPDF – they are already part and parcel of the bigger Parliament that I mentioned earlier on.

I also commit that, Mr Speaker, I will – together with our team on this side – attempt, with due respect, to uphold the ideals that you cherish together with the Rt Hon. Speaker: Evidence-based debate, evidence-based submission and evidence-based legislation.

I also commit to be available, when I am available. *(Laughter)*

I also commit that my office will be open to all sides because – whether NRM, Independent or Opposition – we all need to give services to our people. My office will be open to you, honourable members. Whether I am there or not, that is an office. There are issues that come on the Floor, but when we talk, even outside in our respective offices, we can handle them. I promise you.

My roles and responsibilities are well written, others are not written. I pray that we work as a team. Let us work in team spirit.

I request that tomorrow, Mr Speaker – I said, “I will be available, when available” – you permit me to be out of Parliament. I will be handing over the office of the Minister of State for Education and Sports (Sports) to my friend and brother, Hon. Peter Ogwang, at State House, Nakasero in the afternoon.

I will definitely exercise my powers to delegate one of my colleagues on the front bench to stand in for me. As and when I am available, I will be available, honourable members. May God bless you. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I will allow your checkmate *-(Laughter)*

2.37

THE OPPOSITION CHIEF WHIP (Mr John Baptist Nambeshe): Mine is to receive you with open hands, my colleague. We know each other inside out and I hope you will measure up *-(Laughter)*.

Mr Speaker, mine was to comment on your communication, especially giving congratulations to the *wananchi* in Kenya upon a peaceful election of their new president-elect.

As you would also appreciate, the media, including state-owned media, were very balanced and given the freedom to stream live all the results that were being channelled into the public portal.

The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission in Kenya has demonstrated by word and deed that they are indeed independent because they channelled all the results from Form 34A- that is from the polling stations - to a public portal, unlike in the neighbouring countries, including ours.

Mr Speaker, if you were to religiously and dutifully follow -which you did, I am sure – the campaign trails, even the eventual voting, the rivals to the project of the head of state were give equivalent airtime in the media. There was no teargas, no torture; there were no anti-riot police - like in some countries where guns on the streets would be more than nurses in Mulago.

We could borrow a leaf from the neighbourhood's book; that is my observation on what is happening.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Leader of the Opposition. What is important, the laws being implemented in each country are passed by their parliaments. Here, we are the ones who make the laws. So, if there is something you appreciated, the task will be for you to incorporate it. But it takes two to tango.

So, it is a lesson for all of us; not only for those who are tear-gassed, but also the “tear-gassers” - if that is what it means. Both of us must learn from the process. Nevertheless, it was a process which everyone of us should appreciate.

MR OSHABE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank and appreciate you for having a keen eye that observed what transpired in Kenya, especially your prayer of peace in the region because, as Uganda, anything that goes on in Kenya really affects us.

So, I think your message was critical at such a time as this, and the smile with which you said whatever you said, looked like the person you supported won. I would like to congratulate you very much upon that. *(Laughter)*

Mr Speaker, whenever such things go on, as a country, we must seriously pick lessons. The

Kenyan election was a very big lesson to us; the institutions that caught my eye during the Kenya elections were the key institutions, especially the army.

Despite the fact that the army was deployed on the streets, they were not kidnapping the people. They were not doing the things that we witnessed here. It seemed that every institution was working for the people of Kenya.

As Ugandans, we should never bury our heads in the sand; as we celebrate the Kenyans, we must ensure that every institution here knows that there are people of Uganda to serve, not just an individual or a regime. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Colleagues, in the Public Gallery this afternoon, we have visitors of Namugongo Martyrs Church of Uganda, from St Mark's Kennington, the Diocese of Southwark in the United Kingdom. They include: Reverend Canon Stephen Causon, Priest and former vicar of Namugongo Martyrs Church of Uganda; Rebecca Causon spouse to Reverend Stephen; Emma White, daughter to Rev. Stephen; Christopher White, son-in-law to Rev. Stephen; and Emma Camp, daughter to Rev. Stephen.

They have come to observe the proceedings of this House. So, join me in welcoming them. *(Applause)*

Colleagues, on matters of national importance - let me first hear from “gender” because gender has become gender, and you know that she is from the border district.

2.45

MS SARAH OPENDI (NRM, Woman Representative, Tororo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to add my voice to congratulate the Kenyans for concluding the elections in a peaceful manner. We who come from the border, when there is no peace in Kenya, definitely, we are the first recipients of our relatives from the other side who cross over to our districts.

I would like to also congratulate the people of Kenya for electing seven women governors this time. This *-(Interruption)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, let the colleague first finish; I do not think this is an issue - then I will allow you.

MS OPENDI: Mr Speaker, this particular time, the number of women governors rose from four (in the 2017 elections) to seven. And, the women who directly competed with men and were elected were 22. We need to appreciate that slowly, Kenya is appreciating the issue of having women in leadership; politics is not meant for men alone. The women also can. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is a very important point to note that Kenya is learning from Uganda. *(Laughter)* The Vice-President is a woman, the Prime Minister is also a woman and so is the Speaker. You see the front bench; we just have two men here and five women. It is important and it should be noted how Kenya has learnt from us.

MR BAKA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The Kenyan election is very important - not only in East Africa, but in Africa as a whole. Wouldn't it be procedurally right to create enough time for this on the Order Paper on another day? That way, we can extensively exhaust the lessons learned because there are many good things to talk about the Kenyan election.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: As presiding officers, we are going to look at it because we have to consult whether we should discuss issues of another country, beyond congratulations and all that. We have to be very cautious. Sometimes, the language goes beyond the limits of diplomacy. We might end up doing more harm than good.

Hon. Kivumbi, you have a procedural matter?

MR MUWANGA KIVUMBI: Mr Speaker, I also take this opportunity to welcome my brother, Hon. Obua, as the Government Chief Whip.

Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of procedure. On Thursday, I rose again on a matter of procedure regarding the numerous letters I have written to the Clerk to Parliament to avail me - as the shadow minister for finance, but even then as an ordinary Member of Parliament - a copy of the resolution that was passed by Parliament on the Vinci coffee debate.

Mr Speaker, you promised to have a minister on Friday, but that never came to pass. I again stand to raise the same procedural point. The reason I am insisting on it is that the very essence and necessity of us, as Members of Parliament, is the authenticity of the resolutions and recommendations that we pass. If, by extension, they are shortchanged, then our well-meaning intentions for the country are rendered useless.

I have four resolutions that I am following up. I have followed up the one of Atiak, which, for all intent and material purposes, was altered. I am also following up the one on Vinci coffee.

Mr Speaker, it is a matter that I will go to every length to ensure that the sanctity and authenticity of our resolutions are abided to by all organs of the state.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, I am rising on a point of procedure, whether the Clerk can decline to give me a copy of the resolution that was adopted and passed by this Parliament?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable member. You have made a very grave allegation that the parliamentary resolution on Atiak was altered. When a resolution is extracted, a copy of the *Hansard* is attached, which is a clear record of the proceedings, so that even the implementing officer or agency is able to follow the debate of that day. Otherwise, if the resolution is different from the record of the *Hansard*, then that implementing officer should be able to raise it and say, "No, this is not".

However, I request that you give me a copy of the parliamentary resolution on Atiak, which you say was altered because when such a

statement is made on the Floor of Parliament, it is very close to questioning the legitimacy and integrity of this House.

So, I request that you submit a copy of the altered resolution. We will compare whether it is not in line with the record on the *Hansard*. On the one on Vinci coffee, yes, I have not gotten back to you, and I met the Clerk. The Clerk, for the record, which can be captured here, clearly told me he downloaded a copy of the *Hansard* and forwarded it to the Executive for action.

That copy is a public document. It is on the website of Parliament; anyone of you can access it. So, I encourage colleagues - anyone who is interested in what was resolved on Vinci Coffee, please, you can access either from the *Hansard* office or on the website of Parliament. It is another "Form 34A"; it is on the public portal. You can go and check on it.

I do not know whether that satisfies you, Hon. Muwanga Kivumbi? I guided the Clerk that indeed, that should be enough.

MR MUWANGA KIVUMBI: Mr Speaker, on the first one; tomorrow, I undertake to lay on the Table, the following:

- i) The report of the committee that was adopted;
- ii) A copy of the resolution on Atiak that I have; and
- iii) The *Hansard* of that day and I will do it tomorrow.

On the second matter, Mr Speaker, I am not satisfied with that answer because the communication from Parliament to the Executive is not through the *Hansard*. It is through a resolution that is well processed. The Clerk cannot, in any way, say, "I am incompetent and I just downloaded." Then, let the Executive have its own way.

So, the point, Mr Speaker –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Muwanga Kivumbi, that is not the language to use in reference to our Clerk.

MR MUWANGA KIVUMBI: Let me withdraw the word "incompetent" and say that he found it not necessary to do the due diligence he ought to do. Now, if we are exhausting the internal matter – and I want it on record – I will move to the High Court and compel him, through the Public Information Act, to avail me that copy.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, that is your right; you can go ahead. Colleagues, time is not on my side. We are going to continue – yes, Member for Kyegegwa?

MS KABAHENDA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I stand to comment on what featured in the communication you made to congratulate Kenya for concluding their election –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, that is not a procedural matter, honourable member.

MS KABAHENDA: I am coming to the procedure, Mr Speaker –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, no, no! Please, I do not have time, honourable member.

MS KABAHENDA: Mr Speaker, let me then raise the procedural matter. On the Kenya election where they now have the first ever albino in the world as an MP - Mr Speaker, while we are here in Parliament, all the proceedings of Parliament are relayed to the public. Wouldn't it be procedurally right for us to have an interpreter in this House?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Is that for our television broadcasts?

MS KABAHENDA: Yes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay, because the interpreters we have are for MPs who are not able to hear. We are going to look at that administratively. Hon. Namugga, you have a point of procedure? Colleagues, let procedure be procedure.

MS NAMUGGA: Mr Speaker, Shs 108 billion was given to Atiak Sugar factory through a supplementary budget. As soon as they got the money, the company was burnt. Employees were laid off and they are stuck.

Mr Speaker, are we proceeding very well, when a company is burnt, but the ministry does not give a report and we just leave it at that?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable member. Yes, we are proceeding well. Procedure has to do with the day's business and in today's business, we do not have Atiak. So, we are proceeding well, honourable member. *(Laughter)* However, you can raise that matter in another forum.

MR OSHABE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. From what Hon. Muwanga Kivumbi raised, his decision is to go to court and compel the Clerk to provide information. However, that would be a bad precedence to this House. Will it mean that every Member, who desires a copy of a resolution and desires something about what we have concluded on, will need to go to court to compel the Clerk?

Mr Speaker, can't we handle this better and as a House, take a decision on how Members can get copies of these resolutions? Like you said, it is public information, but when we just leave it like this, I am a bit worried that tomorrow, I may need the same. Will I also need to go to court?

Why don't we, Mr Speaker, find a better mechanism on how these resolutions can be made public and everyone can – whatever we pass here, a resolution is also made public, the same way the *Hansard* is made public?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable. Hon. Kivumbi has said that he is not satisfied with what the Clerk communicated. The Clerk says, "I submitted the *Hansard*. Okay. The *Hansard* has what you voted on. The question was put and agreed to with all the details." That is what he has said he gave, it is available and I have communicated to you. It is available; he provided the *Hansard* to you, delivered it and it is available.

However, Hon. Muwanga Kivumbi says that he is not satisfied. Once a Member is not satisfied, it is his right to use other mechanisms to get satisfied. Hon. Muwanga Kivumbi is exercising his right because he is not satisfied with the administrative steps we have taken. Otherwise, these are public documents. Colleagues, you can go on the Parliament website and you will find them; simple.

Therefore *-(A Member rose)-* no, are you coming to guide the Speaker? No, I do not -

MR NAMBESHE: I am seeking your guidance, Mr Speaker. What Hon. Muwanga Kivumbi -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Opposition Chief Whip -

MR NAMBESHE: Yes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not know that point. It could be procedure; it could be -

MR NAMBESHE: Okay, procedure, but I know you know what I am driving at. Mr Speaker, it is true, as you have put it, that this information is publicly available on our parliamentary website. However, what Hon. Muwanga Kivumbi is trying to exhaust are the internal remedies which require certified copies of the *Hansard*, which the responsible officer, who is the Clerk, has declined to avail him. That is why he now realises that he has virtually no other option other than to seek redress from the High Court. Like Hon. Oshabe put it, it would make this institution look a bit ugly and it may also set a very bad precedent, so to speak.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, to me when you say that it would set a "bad precedent" it is as if there is something you are hiding on a public document; it is not a bad precedent. Maybe it can also be a precedent which we shall be utilising in future, which can guide us. However, this is a public document which is available. Whether it is stamped or not, whatever is on the website of Parliament is what is approved by the Clerk and this House.

Therefore, if any Member reads and is not satisfied then you can - We have a procedure of correcting the record of Parliament, we have a whole chapter on correcting the record of Parliament. Yes, and it is not that what they publish is final. If there is any mistake, we have a law that guides on correcting the record. However, Hon. Muwanga Kivumbi is the one who raised the matter, and he has given you his action; you cannot stop a Member.

Let us have matters of national importance. Colleagues, time is not on our side - Hon. Kibalya, you are rising on the same matter; I have concluded it.

3.01

MR SAMUEL OPIO (Independent, Kole North County, Kole): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance in regard to the looming hike in school fees in the third term.

On 29 July 2022, the National Private Education Institutional Association held a press conference in which they indicated that they intend to increase school fees in third term as a result of the astronomical rise in food prices. We know that early this year, schools re-opened after two years of a lockdown and there were also reported increases in school fees.

Mr Speaker, one of the worst affected segments is in the secondary schools. As we speak, from the UBOS data, the average national secondary school enrolment data shows that only 27.3 per cent of children between the ages of 13 to 18 years are enrolled in secondary school. When you come to primary school, it is 80 per cent. The highest is in Kampala, which is around 52.4 per cent and in northern region, you have Acholi at 7.2 per cent, West Nile at around 14.3 per cent and Lango at 14.5 per cent. In other words, there is low secondary school enrolment. We now have intentional increases in the school fees and this is going to worsen secondary school enrolment in this country.

My prayers therefore are that:

1. The Ministry of Education intervenes. Earlier on, we received information that there were plans to lay statutory instruments to regulate school fees, which the Education Act provides and mandates the ministry towards that effect.
2. Government comes up with measures to enhance secondary school enrolment in this country.
3. Lastly, is to look at the fees structure. I have with me fees structures for two Government-aided schools with 28 items -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, we do not have much time; please, just go on with the prayers.

MR OPIO: My request, therefore, to Government is to standardise the fees structure such as the Board of Governors fees of Shs 598,000; and if the school has 1000 students, that is Shs 598 million going to only the Board of Governors. Then school uniform -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Are you comfortable laying it on the Table, honourable member?

MR OPIO: Yes, I will be willing to lay it on the Table to provide more information on this.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Can you do it?

MR OPIO: As I conclude, therefore -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, you can just cross over here. You will conclude after you have read the details of the school.

MR OPIO: This is the Uganda National Household Survey 2019/2020, which is indicating the secondary school enrolment for Uganda, and for the different subregions.

I beg to lay.

I also lay the school fees structure of senior one students, 2022, for St Mary's College Kisubi and for Gazaya High School They are also stamped and signed.

I beg to lay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

3.05

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SPORTS (PRIMARY EDUCATION) (Dr Joyce Moriku): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank my colleague, Hon. Samuel Opio, the MP for Kole North, for raising this very important matter at this very critical time.

Mr Speaker, it is indeed true that given the escalating prices of commodities like food and scholastic materials, the Ministry of Education and Sports is not an exception. It is true that schools have held conference and they plan to increase school fees due to the rising prices of commodities. I would like to inform this House that my ministry, as by law (The Education Act, 2008) is mandated to form a statutory instrument that regulates the school fees and other school related matters.

Colleagues, as we pledged here sometime back -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let the minister first finish.

DR MORIKU: The ministry has already put in place the statutory instrument, which is being reviewed by the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs. In the meantime, before we bring out the instrument to be laid on the Table here, there are procedures in the ministry for any school to increase school fees and these are through the Board of Governors and the school management committee, which have representatives of parents and other stakeholders.

Mr Speaker, I would like to inform my colleague that indeed, the issue of school fees and the increments are real, but as a ministry, we have already taken measures to ensure school

fees is within the framework for the parents as approved by the Board of Governors or the school management committee.

As far as the issue of low enrolment for secondary education –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, that is what the Member is complaining about. You are leaving it to these people to go and determine whatever they want on fees; for example, the Board of Governors.

MS OPENDI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I think it was February this year - just immediately after the first term - when students returned to school. I brought a motion here concerning the issue of school fees, and specifically the fact that most of these schools that have been mentioned are grant-aided, yet Government pays teachers and gives them even funding. But you find they are more expensive than the private schools.

The motion was referred to the Committee on Education and Sports. How I wish the committee could expedite its business and bring a report here regarding that matter. It is high time this Parliament sat and - we would rather stop grant-aiding these schools and allow this money to be sent to our seed secondary schools or other schools in our constituencies. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the Chairperson of the Committee on Education and Sports around? Honourable member, I do not know on what point you stand and so I cannot pick you – No, clarification is to the minister not the Speaker.

Colleagues, I know this is a matter, which can run out of hand and we do not even satisfy ourselves. Committee on Education and Sports, the document is tabled on the Floor. Please, take it up and report back to the House in two weeks' time.

Honourable minister, conclude on the matter. We have handled the one on fees.

DR MORIKU: Thank you. I just want to conclude on the second issue that my colleague hon. Opio has raised.

On low enrolment for secondary school education, it is indeed true the enrolment has dropped because some opt for the skilling and other training programmes.

My ministry has taken steps to sensitise parents on the need to progress from primary to secondary education. I would like to take that up and pledge that we will intensify the need for all of us to ensure that our children progress.

Finally, I would like to pledge, once again, our commitment as Ministry of Education and Sports to ensure that issues pertaining to school fees and enrolment are handled as per the regulations.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

3.11

MR PAULSON LUTTAMAGUZI (DP, Nakaseke South County, Nakaseke): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance regarding six people who were strangled in Nakaseke South County.

Last week, two young girls were strangled to death on their way from Namukekera Industrial Park. The following day, four more *boda boda* riders were also strangled to death. Residents tried to reach the nearby police stations, but they did not get the necessary assistance.

The residents of Kapeeka, Semuto and Nakaseke are currently living in fear. They are still waiting for a response from the Minister of Internal Affairs or the concerned organs to ensure that at least there is order and sanity in the area.

My prayer is that the Minister for Internal Affairs carries out comprehensive investigations to know what is killing these people in Nakaseke. Otherwise, people are living in fear.

Lastly, it is high time Parliament looked into the welfare of our officers in uniform. When most people run to these officers for help, they claim they do not have fuel. Even their patrols do not work. Until we look into this, we shall continue experiencing a lot of insecurity in our country. I submit. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Minister for Internal Affairs? The last one was for the Chairperson, Committee on Defence and Veteran Affairs.

3.13

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Gen. David Muhoozi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Honourable members, I have taken note of the concerns of the honourable member and I will follow up with him to ensure that investigations are done and the culprits are brought to book.

3.14

MR GEOFFREY MUTIWA (NRM, Bunyole West County, Butaleja): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance regarding Buhadyo-Hisiro Swamp, which has turned into a death trap. The swamp connects the people of Buhadyo to the islands of Hisiro in Bunyole West Constituency.

We have lost very many people in an attempt to cross the said swamp. The most recent case is of a one Wehoye Peter, who was crossing using a canoe and drowned on Saturday, 13 August 2022.

Many children from Hisiro Island have dropped out of school while others have never stepped foot in any class because they have to cross it daily to access Buhadyo Primary School.

My prayers are:

1. UNRA should expedite the process of constructing the bridge because it is under the UNRA road that starts from Busoko passing through Busaba and Buhadyo.

2. The same road should be connected to the neighbouring district of Kibuku because all roads must connect to either a national or district road. However, for this case, the road ends in a swamp, which separates the districts of Kibuku and Butaleja. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Government? Should it be a maiden speech for the Government Chief Whip?

3.15

THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Denis Hamson Obua): Mr Speaker, the Member raises two issues: First, the need to expedite the construction of the bridge. My interpretation is that from his submission, this bridge is already in the plan and the budget. What you need is for the Ministry of Works and Transport, represented by UNRA, to expedite the process.

The second issue you raised is that the road be connected to Kibuku. I would like to say that the two matters will be drawn to the attention of the Minister for Works and Transport. Honourable member, if it pleases you, we could even get time and talk to the Minister for Works and Transport such that you can be in touch with him to follow-up on the two issues you have raised. Thank you.

MR KIMOSHO: Thank you, Mr Speaker. We are bringing out issues of national importance. However, some of these issues have budgetary implications, which is okay. Members are in their full right to do that.

Mr Speaker, these institutions are stuck and do not have money, even for fuel –(Interjections)- I seek your guidance because we are the ones appropriating. I seek your guidance –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, you are protected.

MR KIMOSHO: I am seeking your guidance, procedurally, whether it really helps. We keep raising these issues well knowing there is no budget. We are the appropriators of this

budget. I really want to know whether we are proceeding well. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before hon. Nandala-Mafabi comes – if I am to understand what hon. Kimosho said – colleagues, you were in this House last week. You were the ones crying about how the Uganda Road Fund had been given more or less zero release. What the colleague is saying is that even if we talk, these agencies are not being given money.

Therefore, I think what is important is for us to ensure that, indeed, money is available.

Honourable minister, did you submit the records? The minister was supposed to submit to the Clerk the releases for the road sector. Did you do that, honourable minister? Hon. Amos, I remember that you are the one who raised that issue.

3.19

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PLANNING) (Mr Amos Lugoloobi): Mr Speaker, we have been waiting for space to actually present the report. We were given last Thursday, but we did not appear. Today, we do not appear on the Order Paper.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Clerk, put them on tomorrow's Order Paper. This is because I have not seen it in my office. Otherwise, I put on the Order Paper what I have seen. What I have not seen cannot get space. If that is it, tomorrow, we shall discuss this issue comprehensively, colleagues.

Colleagues, we should not go back to the same issue. Let us receive the report tomorrow. After receiving it, we will be able to discuss it from an informed point of view.

MR NANDALA-MAFABI: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I think a colleague has raised a very important issue. What was the purpose of UNRA building a road that ends in a swamp, and it cannot cross? You cannot come and say it is a budgetary issue because the

purpose should have been that the road would serve a certain community. If it is supposed to serve a certain community, UNRA should have put it in its budget up to where it should reach. I do not think we should come here to say: “There are budget cuts.” This cannot work because the purpose was to serve a community.

Mr Speaker, these are the issues I wanted to ask -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: You can get another microphone, honourable colleague.

MR NANDALA-MAFABI: Mr Speaker, hon. Lugolobi was the Chairperson of the Committee on Budget. I do not think he is right to come and say, “There are issues”. What he should come here and tell us whether in his budget he included that road or provided the services to that community. He has said that children cannot go to school and people are being killed. This is very dangerous and it will be very dangerous for Government, which cannot plan for a community.

Mr Speaker, I would like to suggest - if you do not mind - that this is a serious matter. We would like the Minister for Works and Transport to come tomorrow with a reason why he built a road and stopped on the way instead of completing it to serve the community.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. A colleague has raised a procedural matter and I have not yet guided. The issues are going to be very many, colleagues. I tend to agree with what Hon. Nandala-Mafabi is saying.

Government Chief Whip, since you have committed and tomorrow the Minister for Finance, Planning and Economic Development is tabling the report on releases for the Uganda Road Fund and UNRA, let the Minister for Works and Transport be here and explain this matter – either it was done or it was not. There isn’t much research needed to be done. It is a direct answer. This is so that, tomorrow, the people of Bunyole can listen to the response of the concerns raised by the colleague.

Colleagues, I hope the matters of procedure that I am getting are not reinventing the same issue, because the minister is coming tomorrow.

MR OMARA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker – *(Interruption)*

MR NANDALA-MAFABI: Hon. Omara was seated here, but he left the microphone here and ran there. Is hon. Omara in order to run around? *(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, you are free to choose whichever microphone you like. *(Applause)* A colleague might be planning to be on the ruling side one day. *(Laughter)*

MR OMARA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I think there is a much broader issue. Last week, the Minister for Finance, Planning and Economic Development was quoted to have said that he does not have money to run the economy.

This Parliament passed an Appropriation Bill, which was assented to by the President, and it became an Appropriation Act. This Parliament also passed the Charter for Fiscal Responsibility, which, among other things, set targets and milestones. For example, it set our debt level for Financial Year 2022/2023 at 53.1 per cent.

During the budget process - when the budget was being presented - the Minister for Finance, Planning and Economic Development told us that our debt-to-GDP is at 49 per cent.

Mr Speaker, the Appropriation Act gives us leeway to borrow money. This Parliament actually appropriated Shs 28 trillion. Shs 8 trillion was a rollover and the remaining part was debt.

Would it not be procedurally right for the Minister for Finance, Planning and Economic Development - when he comes here tomorrow - to present to the country our financial position in terms of implementing our budget, including making sure that they borrow sufficient money

approved by Parliament so that we make money available to fund the budget? There should be no issue of saying they do not have money to run the economy.

I submit, Mr Speaker. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable colleague. This is an issue which I will refer to the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development. Let the minister, and committees, be proactive. We do not need to first have everything coming here. Sometimes, you need to scrutinise a lot of data and a lot of figures, which you cannot do on the Floor. Therefore, I refer this matter to the Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development. You invite the minister so that you look through the allegations as made - Honourable member, do you want to agree or not? *(Laughter)*

3.26

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (Mr Keefa Kiwanuka): Mr Speaker, I would like to agree with your guidance. However, I would just like to mention that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development has been very slow and I do not know why.

We were supposed to have met them –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Slow in what?

MR KEEFA KIWANUKA: They are slow in giving us the information that we require. We have scheduled two meetings so far, which they have not been able to honour – I think the last one was this morning and they did not appear.

MR LUGOLOOBI: Mr Speaker, I think the chairperson is not fair. *(Laughter)* Last week, I spent the whole morning with them, answering various issues. I do not know why he is saying we are not appearing.

Today, I did not have that invitation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: So, colleagues, you see, on the Floor, it will not be your word against theirs; we were not there. I did not sit in the committee and I do not know about your invitations. However, Rt Hon. Prime Minister and Government Chief Whip, take up this matter to ensure that indeed - No, I have already guided on this matter; colleagues, I need to move. Please.

3.28

MS JESCA ABABIKU (NRM, Woman Representative, Adjumani): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity. As a representative of the people of Adjumani, my matter is on the worst spots on the roads in Adjumani District.

Yesterday, some of the community members demonstrated. One of these roads is from Adjumani Town to Mungula, from Adiri to Sukari, Olijji-Ogujebe - the Olijji Bridge has never been worked on.

Lastly, connecting Adjumani through Sinyanya is a problem.

My prayers are that the Ministry of Works and Transport should –

- i) Go to Adjumani District to assess the situation of Olijji Bridge;
- ii) Work on the three roads; and
- iii) Work on the Sinyanya ferry.

I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Rt Hon. Prime minister and Government Chief Whip, ensure the minister also responds to this tomorrow.

3.29

THE THIRD DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (Ms Rukia Nakadama): Mr Speaker, like you guided before, the Minister of Works is supposed to come here with a report. He will come with a comprehensive report on the roads, especially where there are bridges that

are not connecting. I am going to inform him so that he comes with the report tomorrow.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, the report is from the finance ministry on funding.

MS NAKADAMA: No. There is one for the finance minister and another for the works minister. Members want to hear from the works minister on why they are not responding.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Prime Minister, the Order Paper is mine; now, you are making it. *(Laughter)*

MS NAKADAMA: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: What I have guided, Rt Hon. Prime Minister, for you to get me properly, is that the finance minister is going to table a report on releases for the road sector; because we got information that they got nearly a zero release. Then the works minister should come to address the question of Bunyole plus this one, and comment on the budget - *(Hon. Oshabe rose_)*

But colleagues, procedure is to do with proceedings that are taking place here. Bring on your procedure.

MR OSHABE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. You have instructed the finance minister to come with details of the release, but only in one sector, which is the road sector.

My plea is that, the release made for the last quarter - whereas districts were expecting a certain percentage, they received only 25 per cent of what they were supposed to get; they sent only money for salaries to the district - no money was sent for works.

Mr Speaker, I am pleading to you that the minister here briefs this Parliament on the releases in the last quarter. What plan do they have for these other agencies, and what are they supposed to do? We are only talking about the road sector, but most of the sectors suffered.

My humble plea is that the minister should add other details on how other sectors were impacted by the absence of money, and what Government plans to do with them.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. However, honourable colleagues, if you listened to me very well, that is what I instructed the minister to do with the Committee on Finance.

Parliament can be briefed through plenary or through committees, and, I emphasised that it involves a lot of figures, which we cannot handle effectively here. He will bring a statement, and then it goes to the Committee on Finance.

Therefore, I guided that the minister appears before the Committee on Finance, and presents all these figures, then the committee will report on the Floor when all of us have thoroughly scrutinised them, and we move forward. That is what I had guided from the onset. Hon. Gilbert Olanya - Hon. Kibalya is whispering; I do not know why he has no confidence.

MR KIBALYA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I belong to the Committee on National Economy. The statement by the colleague there, after the minister said they had no money, was made when we were meeting the finance minister.

Mr Speaker, we shall always disturb your office with matters of national importance, as far as roads are concerned and as far as this is concerned. They will even bring a report because the minister tomorrow is going to bring a report about the releases; we have no remedy for that.

Wouldn't it be procedurally right - because the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker are Members of Parliament; the issues that are happening in our constituencies are the same issues happening in your constituencies.

We know where the problem is. You hold an executive meeting - you hold a comprehensive meeting because Hon. Matia Kasaija was very clear and candid before the committee that; "I

released what I had; I would have wished to release whatever you wanted.” Tomorrow, the minister is going to submit what he released, but it will not cure our problem.

Mr Speaker, wouldn't be procedurally right, through your office, to hold a very extensive meeting with the concerned authorities so that you get a solution for this, so that instead of coming here to read for us reports stating that, “We failed to do this; we did this,” we get a solution. Otherwise, even if Hon. Lugoloobi comes tomorrow to tell us what he released for Kamuli, it will not help me; I want roads in Kamuli.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable colleague. Colleagues, I would like to guide on a matter where I have already guided and ruled. Please, I will not entertain procedure because you are challenging my ruling or guidance.

On a matter where I have already ruled or guided, I will not entertain procedure. Procedure should come on a matter where I have not yet pronounced myself as the Presiding Officer.

Number two, these are issues that are not between the Legislature and the Executive; we first give the Executive a chance - for each one of you to see; we want transparency, to open up. Once they present here and we find that indeed, we need to crosscheck beyond what they have submitted - we always do. In addition, we are always in touch with the Prime Minister, and with the Leader of the Opposition.

We do not want to create a situation as if it is a crisis, where the Speaker must summon the Prime Minister and the works minister to come and answer, “Where do we get money from?” No.

They have their work to do and they must do it. If they do not do it, they will answer here. So, let us give our committee a chance. I believe our committees really do good work. When they come to this committee, where you have all these able-minded people, I am sure they will answer the hardest questions, compared to

when they meet only the Presiding Officer and give explanations.

3.36

MR GILBERT OLANYA (FDC, Kilak South County Amuru): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance concerning the high prevalence of malaria in Acholi Subregion.

According to the report released by the malaria Indicator Survey in the month of July alone, 360 children below the age of 15 died due to malaria.

Mr Speaker, right now, Government is ignoring malaria, yet many of our children are dying due to malaria. In my district, Amuru alone, last month, we lost 18 children to malaria.

My prayers are:

1. That Government takes the issue of malaria very seriously; and
2. I remember between 2010 and 2013, Government carried out what we call Indoor Residual Spraying (IRS). And, within that period, there were no malaria cases in Acholi Subregion; it proved very effective at that particular time. However, immediately Government stopped IRS, cases of malaria escalated. I pray that Government considers resuming IRS to reduce on the cases of malaria in Acholi Subregion.

I beg to move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Minister for Health?

Colleagues, on matters of national importance, one cannot rise to give information.

3.38

MS MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEATH (PRIMARY HEALTH CARE)(Ms Margret Muhanga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. And, thank you, Hon. Olanya, for raising this matter. I remember in May this year, the Ministry of

Health raised a red flag on malaria because cases were rising. In June, we had another Press Conference at the Uganda Media Centre and continued to inform the public that malaria was back, especially in the areas of Busoga subregion.

At that time, I think we were losing about 24 children to malaria, who had so many other complications. For example, some of the children who suffered from malaria were actually anaemic; they had to be infused.

The good news is that the Ministry of Health is going to start vaccination against malaria on all our children. Malaria will be one of the diseases to be vaccinated against, like we have been doing against the six killer diseases. That is the best way forward. There has been no vaccine against malaria, but a vaccine has now been manufactured to control malaria, especially in children, because not many old people die of malaria; it attacks mainly young people. Government is partnering with other countries that are producing this vaccine, and in future, we hope to eradicate malaria in Uganda.

About the Indoor Residual Spraying, we have done this many times, in homes. The problem with it, however, is that within one week, mosquitoes return.

So, if we can fight the anopheles mosquito, which spreads malaria, then we will get rid of malaria completely. And, that is what the Ministry of Health is working on; eradicating malaria in Uganda. Remember, we have ended polio, how was it done? Ending Polio was done through Rotary International and vaccinating older children. A few cases were registered last year in August; otherwise, polio is now history.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. The Member made some serious prayers, one of them being that you should take malaria seriously; you have not committed on that.

MS MUHANGA: Mr Speaker, I am sorry if I did not satisfactorily respond to them. Otherwise, the ministry takes malaria very seriously. In the last two months, we have had several field visits, where there was an upsurge in malaria. We actually increased the number of mosquito nets distributed to the people in the areas, where we visited, and since May, the cases have really dropped. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, I know you take it seriously, and you have even invited me to the launch of the Indoor Residual Spraying on Friday, in Arua. No, colleagues, we are in line. I know if I open up a debate on malaria, the whole day will be gone. We have an Order Paper, colleagues. Hon. Enos Asiimwe?

I know each one of you can make very good submissions, but we might spend the whole day on malaria.

3.42

MR ENOS ASIIMWE (NRM, Kabula County, Lyantonde): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance relating to supply of coffee seedlings to farmers.

The planting season for coffee is starting in a few days from now. On the 4th of May this year, I raised the same issue regarding supply of coffee seedlings to farmers being that it was the start of the season.

The honourable minister appeared on the 12th and made a commitment. Of course, he brought a statement, which was telling us about Government not having enough resources, but he made a commitment though it was based on the availability of resources.

He said he would make a commitment to farmers to supply seedlings to Uganda Coffee Development Authority (UCDA) for onward distribution to the farmers. He also said he was going to write a commitment, to that effect.

Further, he said he would write to the nursery operators to allow him time to mobilise resources and pay them in three instalments.

However, since he made that commitment on the 12th of May, there has been no communication to UCDA. There is also no communication that has come to Parliament relating to that, yet the second season for planting coffee is starting in a few days from now.

Mr Speaker, my prayers are:

1. The Minister for Finance, Planning and Economic Development commits to the nursery operators that he will pay them at a later date, so that they can supply seedlings to the farmers to plant on time; and
2. That commitment be made on the Floor of Parliament because the last time he said he was going to write the letter to UCDA, he never did it; and the season passed without farmers getting the seedlings.

Lastly, I would like to use this opportunity to notify you, to allow me space on the Order Paper, in a week or two, so that I can bring a motion regarding the coffee sector. I plan to do this because there is also a commitment we had made to farmers under the coffee policy.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleague, when you are sure about your time, visit my Office.

MR ENSO ASIIMWE: Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, this is an interesting issue. You have been giving out seedlings, and that is why you are celebrating everywhere on how bags of coffee have increased and so forth. From our assessment, we are attributing that greatly to the distribution of seedlings.

However, excuses were made here that, all the money was taken to the Parish Development Model, yet the House appropriated money for seedlings, if I can remember very well.

Honourable minister, even if we said you have not yet implemented and you say that you still want to do it under the Parish Development

Model, you have not released money for the Parish Development Model *-(Applause)-* I hope Chairman Onzima, you are ready because our report should come – and you have not yet even created the village SACCOs, meaning that the Parish Development Model is going to take long.

Honourable minister, the scenario we have is that there are people who prepared their nursery beds. They borrowed money and that is what they have been doing. It has been their business. They borrowed from banks and SACCOs. They have the seedlings ready and all they were saying was: “Even if you make arrangements for us, and we supply, and you pay us even after two years - phase our supplies as we prepare for the Parish Development Model money so that we can buy seedlings” nothing has been done. The minister came here and agreed with that; he made a commitment. Now, farmers are calling us from everywhere saying, these MPs are hiding from their farmers. On top of that, nursery bed operators are saying, “When your term started, they removed coffee seedlings.” Honourable minister, what do we do about this? Is coffee still a priority cash crop for this country?

MR LUGOLOOBI: Mr Speaker, I think it is an issue of strategy. We came here during the Budget process - during preparation of the budget framework paper, and also with the final estimates, - with issues of strategy, and particularly on the issue of re-purposing the Budget. We made certain fundamental decisions because we had to look within the available resources to see how we repurpose those resources, particularly towards the Parish Development Model. In doing that, we were cognisant of the fact that apart from coffee, there were many other enterprises that farmers from different ecological zones are involved in.

We noted that whereas Uganda Coffee Development Authority was supplying seedlings, there were inefficiencies here and there in terms of the distribution of these seedlings. Given the fact that the demand for inputs was supply-driven and not demand-driven, what we are doing now, under the new

strategy, is to follow a demand-driven approach within which we are availing resources to the various parishes under the Parish Development Model.

Mr Speaker, I was here last week and presented a detailed report on how far we had gone. The report was not discussed, but I had indicated in there –(*Interjections*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Colleagues, we have asked the minister; so, let him respond. With clarification, he has a right to accept or not and he has refused. Please, I would like the honourable minister to give us information. Listen to him; he is a Minister for Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

MR LUGOLOOBI: I know what he was going to ask.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Nsamba, he will allow you, but let us allow him to give us information. Hon. Abed Bwanika and colleagues, regarding clarification, it is the right of the Member holding the Floor to accept or not. You cannot force him, and you do not need to be angry about it. If he feels he does not want to clarify anything to you, it is his right. Have peace. Please honourable minister, you should only take clarification when you want. You are not forced to take clarification. Continue.

MR LUGOLOOBI: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the wise ruling –(*Laughter*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Lugoloobi, go on with your business.

MR LUGOLOOBI: I could predict what he was going to ask, but Mr Speaker, I would like to mention that in that report, we had indicated that we had gone a long way in establishing the Parish Development Model SACCOs. In fact, we are at the stage of validating these SACCOs. Some of them have already been entered into the Integrated Financial Management System. I did indicate that. Since we are releasing these resources directly to the SACCOs, we wanted to do a thorough validation to make sure that the members of these SACCOs are actually the real beneficiaries.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable minister, the answer you are giving us now will not help us. Come tomorrow when we are discussing your statement when you have revised this. Our concern is simple; you are talking of validating and of processes, but the rains are not going to wait for you. This is a planting season; it will not wait for you. It is very simple. God is not going to halt whatever He is doing for you to interfere with His season because you are doing verification and all that.

What we are saying is very simple, honourable minister. Putting aside your issues of Parish Development Model, you have very many people who are struggling with seedlings. Go and look through it; sit as the Executive. Even if you do not give us an answer now, just go back and take our concerns in good faith.

A very good example, colleagues, on the Parish Development Model is, on top of the Shs 100 million for this financial year, there is Shs 17 million which was supposed to have come in the other financial year. You said you are going to give us Shs 117 million. What if you met, as the Executive, and said, “We are going to use the Shs 17 million to address the concerns of seedlings for tea, maize, etc and then the Shs 100 million is the one we shall roll out with?”

MS AGNES ATIM: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a procedural issue. Listening to the honourable minister for finance telling us about systems and strategy, I wonder whether we are really proceeding well, when actually, we lost the first rains in the drought. Now, the second rains have started and the acclaimed Parish Development Model funds have not been released, and may not be released soon.

We are talking about priority crops. When you talk about coffee, just be mindful that Shs 800 billion of your budget is actually funded by coffee, being the highest earning crops in this country. We have talked about coffee in the House very many times. If your strategy was good enough, by now you would be laying an addendum of your strategy to tell us how you are going to manage the priority crops.

As a Committee on Agriculture, we presented to you and said, as we begin the Parish Development Model, let us start in a phased manner, and consider priority crops; and as Government, let us continue investing to support our farmers. Are we really proceeding well, Mr Speaker, when the second rains have come and are almost going, and the ministry is not coming out clearly as to how our farmers are going to be supported in this second season? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Colleagues, we are pre-empting tomorrow's debate. Honourable minister, you have heard the concerns. Let us push all of this to tomorrow. The minister will have consulted colleagues. What we need is the quality of answers. Let the minister go back and consult his colleagues so that tomorrow, we are able to have a sustainable debate.

4.00

MR AMOS OKOT (NRM, Agago North County, Agago): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Yesterday, around 11.00 a.m., a one Atoo Pascal Ocock was killed using *pangas*, spears and arrows by suspected Karimojong warriors. As we talk, the body is lying in the house.

Karimojong warriors always come to our area and they have started following people to their gardens. They wait for you with your oxen, attack you from the garden and remove your oxen. Not only that, they even follow you with the cooked food you are carrying and taking to the garden to the farmers. They go into the houses and take away granaries people have built.

Mr Speaker, the situation is escalating day and night.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Prayers?

MR AMOS OKOT: My prayers are that:

1. The UPDF should start doing patrols; they should not just sit in their detaché. They have been deployed, and so they should carry out patrols;

2. In the areas in Kaket, where the farmland is, the UPDF should put detachés and move in those areas; and
3. Since the situation is escalating, if this House pleases, the UPDF should help us to bury these people. Because, each time they kill us, we just suffer. I beg to move.

Mr Speaker, the person who has been killed is a councillor for Lapono subcounty.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Our condolences, honourable member. I think this is an internal affairs ministry's matter. I wouldn't want to immediately bring in the UPDF because it would need investigations to first know who did it and all that. So, Honourable Minister of Internal Affairs, on this matter -

4.02

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Gen. David Muhoozi): Mr Speaker, I have heard the concerns of Hon. Okot. Indeed, it is an internal security matter, but because it is the paramilitary, the UPDF has been involved somehow and troop levels were increased recently, I need to work with the leadership at the defence ministry, to see how they can become more vigilant and ensure that the Karimojong do not come in.

On the issue of the loss, I will follow-up with hon. Okot to see how we can help to send-off of the councillor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

4.03

DR TIMOTHY BATUWA (FDC, Jinja South Division West, Jinja City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on a matter of national importance in regard to the frustrating process of getting a national identity card by some Ugandans called the "*Chotaras*".

Mr Speaker, the *Chotara* people are the half-castes of mixed Ugandan and our brothers, the Indians and the Arabs, blood. You can easily identify them by their skin and hair.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: So, do we call them half-castes?

DR BATUWA: We call them half-castes; although locally, they are commonly referred to as “*chotara*”. They have a big problem obtaining the Ugandan National Identity Card, including those who were born in Uganda, and whose parents are born in Uganda, and can trace their origin to their great grandparents.

We would like to inquire from the minister whether, even when there is reason to delay the process - which is frustrating them - it is possible to allocate a day, say in Jinja, where all those who are in Busoga subregion can converge and try to iron out issues with the Ministry of Internal Affairs that are frustrating them from getting a national identity card?

4.05

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Gen. David Muhoozi): I have heard the concern of Dr Batuwa. First of all, the issue of national identity and citizenship is a creature of the law of the Constitution of Uganda. And, for those who are not citizens, there is also a procedure on how one can acquire citizenship.

Regarding that peculiar constituency of the *chotaras*, like he called them, it is easy to go there and hear their concerns and then advise how we can help them sort out their problem.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Next item.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON
GOVERNMENT’S DECISION TO HALT
BODY ORGAN EXAMINATIONS FOR
MIGRANT WORKERS

4.06

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS (Gen. David Muhoozi): Rt Hon. Speaker, the issue of migrant labour is topical for various reasons, specifically, safety, skilling and tracking of our people who go abroad for work, especially in the Gulf States.

My statement today regards the issue of organ extraction as alleged in the various quarters recently including the press.

The subject of body organ donation, extraction and transplantation has attracted attention and concern lately, especially as far as protection of our migrant labour is concerned. The labour export companies have their views on this, and so does the Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development, which is the docket ministry for labour export, as well as the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

The press has also been awash with alarming stories of Ugandans whose organs were reportedly extracted in the countries where they work, and other claims are that organs are also extracted before they go.

The idea of pre-travel examination of Ugandans travelling abroad, especially to the Gulf States for employment was, therefore, conceived within this broad context of seeking a solution to ensure that the safety of Ugandans against this risk is put in place. In addition, we needed to have institutional harmony and not work at cross purposes on this matter. After all, we all seek to ensure the safety of Ugandans.

At the internal affairs ministry, we acknowledge that this is a crosscutting issue involving many players, in addition to the internal affairs ministry, which is only a gateway. The other players are the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, whose docket is to regulate this sector; Ministry of Health, especially regarding examination of those who go out; as well as the labour export companies to ensure and formulate an agreed safety mechanism for our citizens going for work abroad.

There is also the issue of consent by the individual supposed to undergo examination, as well as the choice of accredited facilities from where to conduct these examinations, the cost issues involved, and who meets them. We shall, therefore, need consensus in all this and strive to achieve consensus with all the concerned parties.

That said, however, we have in the offing the Uganda Human Organ Donation and Transplant Bill, which partly seeks to answer some of these concerns. This provides timely and appropriate reference and reinforcement of the measures we all seek.

The objective of this Bill is to establish a legal framework for the regulation of organ, cell and tissue donation and transplantation in Uganda, by protecting the dignity and identity of every person and guaranteeing without discrimination, respect for his or her integrity and other rights and fundamental freedoms in regard to donation and transplantation of organs, tissues and cells of human origin.

Cabinet, in that respect, directed the Ministry of Health to draft the Uganda Human Organ Donation and Tissue Transplant Bill.

Accordingly, the Ministry of Health drafted principles for the proposed Bill, which were approved by Cabinet, vide Minute 126(CT2017), and authorised the Minister for Health to issue drafting instructions for the First Parliamentary Counsel to draft this Bill.

The First Parliamentary Counsel, in collaboration with other stakeholders, drafted the Bill, in line with the approved principles, except for principle (VI), which provides for the board.

Sections 80 to 82 of the Bill establish the human organ, tissue and cell database, and how data that is collected will be managed. There is need for cross-reference with the Data Protection and Privacy Act, 2019 so that the two laws are synchronised.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs finds the Bill exhaustive in achieving its set objectives of addressing the lacuna present in both the law and healthcare practice in Uganda, in relation to organ, cell and tissue donation and transplantation.

This Bill will, therefore, go a long way in bridging these gaps and improving health care in Uganda, to the extent that this relates to the

regulation of donation and transplantation of human organs and tissues in Uganda.

In addition, stakeholder consensus will be sought on the safety of our migrant labour, including on the issue of alleged organ extraction, whether here or in those countries where these young people go for employment.

I thank you and beg to submit, Mr Speaker. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. Colleagues, this is a very clear statement; no need for debate – Yes, because there are two issues.

Colleagues, the issues were only two. One, we were saying: “Did you stop the examination and all that?” The minister has said: “Yes.” He has said he can only resume it when there is a law to enable him do that and he has said he is preparing the law.

Now, rule 80 of our Rules of Procedure stops us from anticipation. We are not going to discuss a matter where the minister has only said he will bring and he has not brought –

First of all, rule 52(2) says the “statement may be discussed”. So, it is at the discretion of the Speaker and when I am using my discretion, I assess. I have assessed. Apart from rotating around, there is nothing we shall debate of value, in addition to this statement. So, I am referring it to the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs and the Committee on Gender, Labour and Social Development to help them when doing their work. *(Applause)* It is clear.

**MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON
EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES ON THE
STATE OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES
IN SELECTED SECTORS AND
AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PROGRAMMES**

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable chairperson, you have 20 minutes for presentation. The report was uploaded, so, we should have read it. However, we shall capture

the whole report on the *Hansard* record so that whoever will be reading it in future will be able to follow. So, let us do a summary and debate. Hon. Nsamba, I was saving more time for debating this report. It is very important.

(The report is hereby appended.)

4.14

THE CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES (Ms Judith Alyek): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Allow me, first, to lay some of the papers here on the Table before I present the report of the Committee on Equal Opportunities.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, the Floor is yours, honourable chairperson. You have your 20 minutes; you know how you would like to use them.

MS ALYEK: Mr Speaker, thank you so much. First of all, I would like to lay the minutes of the meeting of the Committee on Equal Opportunities held on Thursday, 11 November 2021.

Mr Speaker, I beg to lay the minutes of the meeting of the Committee on Equal Opportunities held on 21 February 2022.

I also beg to lay the minutes of the meeting of the Committee on Equal Opportunities held on Tuesday, 22 February 2022.

Again, Mr Speaker, I beg to lay the minutes of the meeting of the Committee on Equal Opportunities held on Wednesday, 23 February 2022 in Napak District Headquarters.

Mr Speaker, I beg to lay minutes of the meeting of the Committee on Equal Opportunities held on Tuesday, 17 May 2022 in Ibanda District Headquarters. I beg to lay.

Mr Speaker, I am laying, again, the minutes of the meeting of the Equal –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable chairperson, can you lay all minutes at once? That is the practice.

MS ALYEK: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I had quite a number of minutes –*(Laughter)*– Thank you for your guidance. I had so many.

I now beg to lay all these minutes at once. I also beg to lay the extracted recommendations of the report of the Committee on Equal Opportunities, on the state of equal opportunities in selected sectors, and affirmative action programmes. I beg to lay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

MS ALYEK: I also beg to lay the report I am going to read right now, Mr Speaker. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The moment you lay it, it becomes ours. So, it is a copy.

MS ALYEK: Yes. I am laying a copy of the report that I am going to read right now. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, the Committee on Equal Opportunities derives its mandate from Article 90 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda and is established by rule 156 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament of Uganda. It is, *inter alia*, mandated with monitoring and promoting measures designed to enhance the equalisation of opportunities and improvement of the quality of life and status of all peoples, including marginalised groups, on the basis of gender, age, disability or any other reason created by history, tradition or custom, for the purpose of redressing imbalances that exist against them.

Mr Speaker, I have a brief background here, that I would like this Parliament to listen to.

The 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda puts women and all the vulnerable Ugandans in prime light. Chapter four of the Constitution, which covers Articles 20 to 58, makes various provisions aimed at empowerment of women, children, persons with disabilities and ethnic minorities, among others.

Uganda's population is estimated at 40 million people, according to Uganda Bureau of Statistics Population Census, 2019, out of which over 80 per cent constitute the marginalised and vulnerable groups, to whom Government of Uganda has committed affirmative action programmes or grants.

Regarding women, who constitute 52 per cent of the population, Government established the Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme, and for the youth that constitute 80 per cent of the population, Government has instituted the Youth Venture Capital Fund and the Youth Livelihood Programme.

For orphans and vulnerable children who constitute 55 per cent of the population, Government put in place Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) programmes and there are also programmes for persons with disabilities; these have benefitted from the persons with disabilities grant.

For older persons, Government has instituted the Uganda Senior Citizens' Grant, and it has been rolled out to the entire country. A number of programmes have been put in place to support the other vulnerable groups such as the ethnic minorities, the rural and urban poor and persons living with HIV/AIDS, among others.

Mr Speaker, the Equal Opportunities Committee conducted an assessment on the various programmes under affirmative action. Marginalisation, discrimination and inequalities have been the nation's narrative before and during colonial times, evidenced by high levels of poverty, insecurity, inequitable and poor service delivery, sectarianism, stigmatisation, property grabbing, low production levels, denial of opportunities in the various spheres of life and inequalities, to mention, but a few.

Uganda's history has been marred by a series of events that have subjected some of its citizens, such as ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, older persons, youth, women, the poor, orphans and vulnerable children to high levels of vulnerability.

Mr Speaker, Article 32(1) of *the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda* states that, "Notwithstanding anything in this Constitution, the State shall take affirmative action, in favour of groups marginalised, on the basis of gender, age, disability, or any other reason created by history, tradition or custom for the purpose of redressing imbalances that exist against them."

Therefore, to promote equal opportunities for all Ugandans, Government has established a legal and policy framework.

Furthermore, Government of Uganda is a signatory to several international and regional instruments to promote equal opportunities. For instance, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948; the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966; the Declaration on the Rights of Minorities, 1992; the Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) 1979; the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006; the Sustainable Development Goals, 2015; the Declaration on Elimination of Violence Against Women (DEVAW), 1993; and the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples' Convention, 1989, among others.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable chairperson, you have only 20 minutes and I can see you are reading each and every word. Please, go to observations and recommendations on page 7. We have this report. You know some Members - I think that is why we have had the culture of Members reading from here; when the chairperson is presenting, that is when Members are reading. That is why we submit reports early.

MS ALYEK: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Allow me mention the districts that we visited in order to compile this report -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: You have 20 minutes and after that, I am cutting you off.

MS ALYEK: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The committee conducted field activities in the following districts: Pader, Agago, Alebtong, Kole, Napak, Ngora, Kaliro, Sheema, Buhweju, Mitooma, Bushenyi and Ibanda - that is on page 5.

We are going to the findings, observations and recommendations. These are the areas that we were looking at during our visit to those districts. However, before we went to those districts, we had a meeting with the Minister of State for Education and the management of Higher Education Students Financing Board. At a later stage, I will also come with that report and read it as it is included in this report.

Therefore, I would like this House to know what we did and the observations we made. So, the following key findings, observations and recommendations have been identified for immediate action for various programmes under affirmative actions and other equalisation programmes to be implemented in the short to medium terms.

Mr Speaker, the status of equal opportunities in the education sector; and the attainment of equality and inclusivity in development, is significantly predicated on the state of wellbeing, skills and competitiveness of the various categories of individuals and groups in society, as cited with the Sustainable Development Goal for quality education. While, wellbeing is dependent on the quality of healthcare services.

Considering that Government of Uganda has over the past decades made significant gains in education through, *inter alia*, universalising primary and secondary education, according to the recently released results, the performance of Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) in northern Uganda and northern subregions, for instance, is below the national average.

Therefore, the committee noted the average distance travelled by students or pupils to reach their respective schools; majority of the districts visited reported that students cover a distance of more than five kilometres. And,

learners complained about long distance travel from home to school. They reported that this was associated with the challenges of rape, late reporting to school, early departure and inability to complete school homework due to fatigue or late arrival at school.

Therefore, regarding access to the school environment, especially for visually impaired learners, members observed that most of them could not easily reach school since they lacked landmarks. While, wheelchair users also find it very difficult to access educational facilities in these districts.

Mr Speaker, the distance to the nearest facility influences access to education services. The Ministry of Education and Sports standard is that every parish should have a primary school; and there should be a secondary school in every subcounty. So, this policy would make education accessible at that level.

The committee findings also revealed that, secondary and tertiary institutions were far and inadequate in many parts of the sampled areas. This made it very hard for most of the children from hard-to-reach areas to progress to secondary level. Other children keep repeating primary seven because of no access to secondary education. Sustainable Development Goals will be evaluated in the next nine years, yet districts are performing badly with only one secondary school in each district. Teenage pregnancy has also increased due to the lockdown.

The committee further observed that the cost of education services is a determinant in access to education, and many people pay highly for education in private schools. And, those who did not pay any money to schools meet the cost of scholastic materials, between Shs100 to Shs150, which is very costly for the rural people. However, in private schools, especially in urban areas, the cost is much higher compared to Government-aided education facilities.

The committee also observed that the dropout rate is very high. For instance, in Napak District it is at 84 percent. The committee visited special

needs schools, such as in Bushenyi District, where the structures are very dilapidated, and no renovation is being done; and most districts have no special needs schools that the children with disabilities can attend.

Specific Observations

The student loan scheme

The committee observed that in an effort to assess regional balance in the operationalisation of the Higher Education Students Financing Board, a statutory body established by the Higher Education Students Financing Act (No.2), 2014, with a mandate to provide loans and scholarships to Ugandan students seeking to pursue higher education, in Ngora District, two students had benefited at the time we visited. In Kaliro, only one student; in Kole, we had three; and Pader had four students on the loan scheme in the previous academic year. And, students from most of the districts had failed to access the loan scheme due to limited or no information given about the scheme.

The committee, therefore, noted that there is no regional balance in the award of student loans, especially in the northern and eastern regions; and in Karamoja sub-region with the lowest number of beneficiaries.

When it came to staffing, whereas schools had staff establishments, these were less than 68 percent of staffing levels in most of the districts visited, with Napak District in Karamoja having the least at 53 percent. This adversely affects the quality of teaching and learning. Napak District had a teacher to pupil ratio of 1: 91.

High school drop-out rates

The committee observed the highest school drop-out rate was at 84 percent, as I had already mentioned, and that is in Napak District. After primary seven, some pupils do not have where to go, while others repeat P.7 four times because they cannot join secondary school. Their parents cannot afford the school fees and provision of other school requirements.

Distance to schools

The distance to the schools was also observed to be another big challenge. We found that children were walking about 14 kilometres to access primary school education. This has led to early marriages for girls, while the boys end up in pursuit of other livelihoods. Do these children have an opportunity for better education?

Inadequate furniture for pupils

The committee also observed that there was inadequate furniture in classrooms in the primary schools and there is need, therefore, to procure more. This was also a big challenge.

Secondary schools

The committee noted that Government has increased the number of seed secondary schools in many subcounties, while construction of additional seed secondary schools was ongoing in most of the subcounties. The committee appreciates Government's efforts to ensuring at least one secondary school in every subcounty.

Recommendations

1. The Minister for Education and Sports should provide for special needs children to benefit from inclusive education;
2. Washrooms or sanitary facilities for children with disabilities be provided in the schools;
3. The students' loan scheme should be made accessible to all students that intend to borrow the funds for further studies, and more information about the scheme be given to the public to facilitate accessibility;
4. The district quota system should be introduced by the Higher Students' Financing Board so that all districts will have an equal number of students accessing the Students' Loan Scheme

5. The Ministry of Education and Sports should prioritise special needs education. A Special Needs Grant should be allocated to all districts and regional special needs schools to be created at regional level;
6. The Ministry of Education and Sports should ensure equitable recruitment of teachers trained in special needs who can handle students with disabilities in all Government-aided schools to ensure easy access to education for such students to;
7. The committee further recommends that the Ministry of Education and Sports should set concrete targets for improving the quality of primary education, particularly in rural areas, and in reducing the high dropout rates in primary schools, improving literacy and numeracy; and increasing enrolment in secondary schools;
8. Government should establish a special curriculum for the youth who can no longer join formal education. This can be a vocational school that targets skills development;
9. The Ministry of Education and Sports should explore the viability of availing relevant textbooks to public schools in some of these marginalised communities. The ultimate goal of such interventions should not only be to increase enrolment, but also aid retention and improve learning outcomes at all levels in the education value chain; and
10. The Ministry of Education and Sports should implement the Government policy of having Government-aided primary schools in all parishes to reduce inaccessibility to education.

Status of equal opportunities in the health sector

During the field visit, the committee observed that availability of health facilities has enhanced physical access to health care by communities. However, long distances to health facilities

is one of the barriers to accessing health care services. Most communities travelled more than five kilometres from their households. In Ngora District, for example, not every subcounty has a health centre III. The policy of availability of health centres III in every subcounty should, therefore, be implemented to reduce the long distances of more than five kilometres to the nearest health facility. There is need, therefore, for affirmative action in the construction of health facilities in rural areas,.

In some of the districts visited, the number of patients is overwhelming in the existing few health centres. For example, in Bumanya Health Centre IV in Kaliro District, the committee found patients sharing in-patients rooms; both women and men were sleeping in the same rooms.

While in Kabwohe Health Centre IV, the committee observed that the buildings were all dilapidated, with no space for admission and no running water in place. Water was being ferried in jerrycans; and the oxygen cylinders were available, but without heads, hence, they were non-operational.

The delivery room in the maternity ward is very small. Two delivery beds are available, but are too inadequate given the number of deliveries per day. The maternity ward is also in a very poor shape.

The committee also observed that Government policy was intended to have health centres III in every subcounty, and health centres IV in every county. This is not, however, the case in many districts. Women are still dying while giving birth due to limited access to health care facilities.

The committee also observed that in some of the districts visited, such as Ibanda, there was a training committee that coordinates career development activities for healthcare workers. The training committee reviews staff applications for training, and makes recommendations to the district service commission for authority to award study leave with pay as a means to support and guide career development accordingly.

Recommendations

1. Government takes all measures to improve the maternity facilities so that no woman dies while giving birth.
2. Ambulance services should also be available for referral at all times.
3. The committee recommends that Government should strengthen service delivery standards and systems to enhance the health services extended to Ugandans, especially the vulnerable and marginalised. There should be equal access to opportunities across all aspects of life as a major pre-requisite for inclusive growth, socio-economic transformation and sustainable human welfare and development as well as improvement.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable chairperson, can you conclude.

MS ALYEK: I will now go to works and transport.

The committee could not easily move from Ibanda to Buhweju districts due to the bad road network. We had to travel back to Mbarara in order to connect to Buhweju. Roads in such areas with very poor road network should be improved. This is something that we have complained about before.

In Ngora District, the road to Pallisa is also a menace. It is not accessible due to the bad state of the bridges that need upgrading. In Napak District, the roads are also very bad, and are worse during the rainy season because they become impassable. This hindered our oversight visit to those districts.

We, therefore, recommend that:

1. The Ministry of Works and Transport should evaluate the state of all the major roads and establish a redevelopment strategy so as to improve accessibility and livelihood; and

2. Government should devote resources to the improvement of roads in the mentioned districts. This is a pre-condition for the movement of people, goods and services and meaningful engagement in production.

The Water and Environment Sector

The committee observed that other areas in the country lack clean water. Access to clean water is not easy in Buhweju District, where women move long distances to access clean water.

In Napak District, there is need to dig deep wells, because access to clean water is a major problem in that area. We realised that water distribution is not balanced in all the communities, such as in Apac where 146 villages do not have any water sources. They obtain their water from ponds, and it is not very clean; and they move very long distances to access this water.

The committee further observed that latrine coverage in Napak was at 37 per cent and most of the community members still practice open defaecation and the district has very high levels of poverty.

Recommendations

1. The Ministry of Water and Environment should make a detailed assessment of the water scarcity in hard-to-areas and provide possible solutions to that effect; and
2. The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries should support the marginalised groups with improved seedlings and farming tools.

The Youth Livelihood Programme

This is a programme we also considered as affirmative action given to the communities.

Our findings and observations are on page 17.

It was noted that there were no funds under the Youth Livelihood Fund at the district

level to police recoveries. This exacerbated the recovery challenges. The situation was compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic related challenges in the country.

The attitude of the community towards the Youth Livelihood Programme, just like many other Government programmes, complicates the recovery process. Communities think that Government must always provide them with free things and that even revolving funds or loans should not be paid back. Defaulting and delays in the payment of loans or revolving capital, especially due to the timing of the programmes, which in most cases happen during the election period, means that beneficiaries take it as a “thank you” from elected leaders. The funds dwindled, yet the districts were not aware, nor were they informed of the aims of the programme to enable them plan accordingly.

In Agago District, for example, the youth programmes funded under the Youth Livelihood Fund were to a tune of Shs 1,039,743,500 at the time of the visit in September, 2021. However, the total recoveries between 2015 and 2019 were only Shs 273,300,000. For about four years, that was the only amount recovered in Agago.

Recommendations

The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development should:

1. Ensure that the Youth Livelihood Programme guidelines are reviewed to provide for a specific threshold for youths with disabilities. For avoidance of doubt, the committee has also recommended that at least 5 per cent of the beneficiaries be youths with disabilities;
2. Ensure that programme documents, training modules and guidelines are simplified and translated in various languages, appropriate formats and modes so as to target all the beneficiaries;
3. Ensure that the programme uses successful local entrepreneurs to mould the youth

into the business of their choice through apprenticeship programmes before they are left to independently run their affairs;

4. Revisit the criteria of group formation to a smaller number; that is between five to eight members and also be flexible on the membership of the group, to extend beyond villages to at least the parish level; and
5. Empower the youth for wealth creation and districts should develop recovery strategies and recover youth livelihood funds given to the youth.

The Youth Capital Venture Fund

The committee further noted that some districts had not received the Youth Capital Venture Fund, such as Napak District. Also, many district leaders were not aware of about this fund.

Recommendations

1. Sensitisation should be done by the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development on the Youth Capital Venture Fund that was given to Centenary Bank to distribute to the youths at a low interest rate of 11 per cent; and
2. The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development should develop strategies to roll out the Youth Venture Capital Fund.

Mr Speaker, I am about to complete.

The Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme (UWEP)

We noted that the target beneficiaries of the programme are women within the age bracket of 18 to 65 years, and it is a revolving fund. The major issues include delayed transfer of funds from the ministry to local governments, poor repayment of the revolving funds, inadequate operational funds, transport facilitation for community development officers (CDOs) on follow-up for recoveries was inadequate, lack of ownership of the programme by the

community and limited funding for the special programme.

We recommend that:

The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development should:

1. Conduct more awareness training;
2. Simplify documentation like with the Youth Livelihood Fund;
3. Intervenes by holding partnership meetings with the bank to enable women to have cheque books with savings accounts, as well as opening for women groups accounts with no minimum balance required;
4. Avail CDOs with transport for mobilisation to facilitate recovery of the funds, and there should be timely disbursement of funds; and
5. Stakeholders should influence a mind-set change. This was also a very big challenge.

The Special Grant for Persons With Disabilities (PWDs)

The committee observed that there are persons with disabilities missing out on services due to communication challenges. There are no sign language interpreters, for example, in many public institutions, hence Government should develop comprehensive strategies to ensure that no one is left behind while providing essential social services to the community.

We recommended that:

1. Government should develop a data bank (disaggregated data) on persons living with disability;
2. The Ministry of Public Service should ensure that every public office has sign language interpreters; and

3. The Special Grants for Persons With Disabilities (PWDs) programmes should be incorporated

Social Assistance Grant for Empowerment (SAGE)

We observed that women tend to age quickly as compared to men due to hard work and labour, and the effects of childbearing. Government policy provides the age of beneficiaries at 80 years. However, women need affirmative action for their age to be reduced from 80 years to 65 years, Mr Speaker. *(Applause)* That is what we are recommending.

There should also be an annual increment to the monthly payment of the Shs 25,000 given to the beneficiaries by at least 10 per cent due to the inflation rate.

There are days that we always celebrate - these are other issues affecting the vulnerable groups. We have celebration of International days and we observed that budgetary allocation to the vulnerable groups has remained inadequate over a period of time. Youths in districts cannot, for example, organise National Youth Day. PWDs and older persons cannot organise international days for the disabled and older persons. International Women's Day is usually organised by political leaders, especially by the women Members of Parliament, while Government, through the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development organises only at national level.

The recommendation we made here is that Government should take up the responsibility of organising such international days, like the International Women's Day, International Youth Day, and International Day of Persons with Disabilities or older persons at district level for ease of accessibility.

Rt Hon. Speaker, we, in addition looked at the issue of distribution of electricity, because it is one of the factors that can spur development in an area and address poverty.

The committee found that out that the Rural Electrification Programme has improved access to electricity in rural areas and the committee appreciates the efforts made. However, in most rural areas, there were issues of accessibility; wires were passing by the trading centres, but due to high poverty levels, many families could not access electricity due to connection fees, which were high; Yaka is also very costly. In addition, the policy that the building to be connected should be permanent also affected affordability and access to electricity; not many families can afford to build permanent houses in the rural areas. The committee cited this as a very big challenge, because families with semi-permanent buildings cannot get power.

We recommend that:

1. Connection fees and electricity charges should be reduced to increase access to electricity in the rural areas; and
2. The Minister for Energy and Mineral Development should review the policy for power connection in the rural areas.

Poverty levels and security

The committee observed that the poverty levels in most districts are very high, especially in Karamoja subregion. In Napak district, for example, the committee observed during its visits that there was no bank, judicial court or piped water; and there was a border conflict and many other issues, which were affecting service delivery, especially in the provision of services such as immunisation.

The high poverty is also affecting recovery of funds such as the disability funds and Youth Livelihood Programme funds that I talked about. High poverty levels and insecurity were also affecting staffing levels in such districts. We found many workers had already left and never wanted to work.

The committee, therefore, recommends that Government should ensure greater equity and inclusivity in all spheres of the management of public affairs among others; such as improving

access to quality basic social services, improving livelihoods, ensuring equity in appointments to public offices and peaceful coexistence.

There are regions that historically lagged behind in many aspects of socioeconomic progress that require more efforts to cause qualitative improvement in households and socioeconomic conditions, as a strategy to enhance the feeling of patriotism amongst citizens.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move that this report be adopted subject to the recommendations therein.

I beg to submit. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Chairperson, for the good report. This is your first report. You have taken long, but you moved around the whole country, and tried to do a very good and commendable job, which you have achieved, according to your report. However, I am concerned that out of 39 members, only 15 signed. Yet, I am seeing many Members here who are members of the committee - no, you cannot fail to get signatures for a whole year.

Honourable member, you produce one report in a year, which you cannot even sign. It means you never did anything for your committee, if you could not sign a report that has taken a full year. This has to be taken seriously. Members, if you do not sign a report, and there is no minority report, we shall require you to explain why and where you belong. (*Applause*)

Therefore, I urge chairpersons of committees that in such a situation, always share with the whips, when you get challenges of signing reports so that the party whips who deploy Members to these committees can take note of what they are doing.

Honourable colleagues, before we proceed, I forgot in my communication - I was supposed to announce the unfortunate death of Hon. Jesca Eriyo, the former Woman MP for

Adjumani District, the former Minister of State for Environment and former Deputy Secretary-General of the East African Community. She was our colleague. She passed on in the United States of America (USA) due to cancer. It is extremely unfortunate to lose such a young person with such professional experience. I, therefore, call upon you to rise so that we can pay respect to our fallen comrade.

(Members rose and observed a moment of silence.)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. We are going to debate this report for 45 minutes and debate starts now. I will start with Hon. Ndeezi. I see members of the committee standing up, but if you are a member of the committee, please, sit down. I have read through the report and so, I know the members. In addition, some of you did not sign.

Members, you will allow me to first pick Hon. Ndeezi, Member for Napak, because I have seen that Napak has many issues. I have taken long without seeing Hon. Karubanga submit. *(Several Members rose.)* No, I am going to give you time. I am going to pick Hon. Mawanda, Hon. Kahunde and Hon. Christine from Kumi, first. Each one, two minutes. Clerk, please, set the clock.

4.52

MR ALEX NDEEZI (NRM, PWDs Representative): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity. I would like to say that this report is one of the most useful and best reports we have received in this Parliament. *(Applause)* I place on record my appreciation to the committee. Due to time constraints, I will try to summarise my points. But generally, I support the committee and urge that we adopt it.

The first point is about the establishment of special needs education schools. We welcome the committee's recommendation to establish regional schools focusing on special needs education and inclusive education. I, however, wish to remind the august House that 10 years ago, His Excellency the President in his re-

election manifesto promised to construct 16 regional schools in the original colonial districts of Uganda. But up to now, only two have been constructed. There is a balance of 14. Therefore, I implore the Minister for Education and Sports to ensure that we have these schools captured in the next financial year.

The second and very exciting is the recommendation for the employment of sign language interpreters by the Public Service Commission. The committee is correct to observe that we cannot achieve the principle of leaving no one behind without having sign language interpreters.

We have more than one million deaf persons in this country. They cannot access the courts of law, they cannot access the police, and they cannot access health care. Therefore, this is the time for us to stand firm as Parliament and say, "Please, Ministry of Public Service, we need to find this issue captured in your Budget Framework Paper for the next financial year." I need to point out that as we speak right now, this country has no policy on special needs inclusive education. The policy is very important if we are to realise the goals of special needs education.

Work on this policy was concluded, but it has stagnated in Cabinet. I appeal to the Minister for Education and Sports to, please, have this item included on the agenda of Cabinet and we get our policy approved so that it can be implemented.

Mr Speaker, another point is about the role of Parliament. Rule 183(4) of the Rules of Parliament states that: "The Committee on Equal Opportunities shall report to the House at least twice a year." We made this rule because we know these issues of equal opportunities are very important. I am not sure if we got any report in the First Session of this Parliament. The rule here says we should be getting at least two.

Mr Speaker, I beg you to guide the committee to ensure that we debate these issues at least twice a year to be able to arrest them and are able to push for implementation.

Lastly, and very important, right now, Government has a programme called rationalisation of Government departments. Under the idea of rationalisation, Government has proposed to abolish or merge the Equal Opportunities Commission. We are very worried – we are the marginalised people in this country – because the Equal Opportunities Commission is a constitutional body charged with the leading role in the implementation of the principles of affirmative action and equalisation of opportunities. If this commission is abolished, we – marginalised people – will be in danger. *(Applause)* This is an existential threat to us. I do not think that I will be proud of calling myself a Ugandan once this commission is abolished.

So, Mr Speaker, I request Government that: Can we have a clear commitment from Government to the effect that there are no plans whatsoever to abolish the Equal Opportunities Commission? Can the nation know that Government intends to retain the Equal Opportunities Commission? Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon. Ndeezi. I gave special treatment to Hon. Ndeezi because of his experience and situation on these matters. So, colleagues, the rest of you have two minutes.

4.59

MS FAITH NAKUT (NRM, Woman Representative, Napak): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I wish to thank the committee for the excellent job.

As a representative of the people of Napak, I agree with the committee on the issues they have raised. I only wish to add to the recommendations on education and health. One recommendation concerns access to a secondary school. We know it is Government's plan to put up secondary schools, but it will take a while before those schools come.

To save those students who cannot access a secondary school, I recommend that we allow the existing Government-aided schools to operate day schooling so that the students who

cannot afford the boarding facilities can attend as day scholars.

On the issue of health, we have two subcounties that do not have any health facility of any level – not even a health centre II and people have been dying there in big numbers. I recommend that we prioritise those subcounties, not only in Napak, but in every part of this country that does not have a health facility.

The Ministry of Health should privatise those subcounties in the implementation of the VHT programme so that there is – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable colleague.

5.01

MR MICHAEL MAWANDA (NRM, Igara County East, Bushenyi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee for its report, which I believe has covered quite a number of issues.

I will briefly talk about three issues. One, in their recommendation, they talked about the Youth Venture Capital Fund – that it should be reviewed. However, I think this Youth Venture Capital Fund has now been taken to the Parish Development Model. So, it is something that I think we need to look at and see how we can place it.

Secondly, the committee talked about the high dropout rate of students. Mr Speaker, I think the Ministry of Education and Sports should actually carry out extensive research and investigations on why there is a high dropout rate of pupils.

When you look at the intake for Primary One, they are in millions. When they reach Senior Four, they start reducing. Where they were eight million, they now become two million. You wonder where the six million have gone. When it comes to Senior Six, they are in the hundreds of thousands. For example, this year, I think there are 256,000 students who are going to sit Senior Six, against the eight million that

started primary One. Where did the rest of the students go?

I think the Ministry of Education and Sports should carry out a thorough research and find out why, such that a solution can be sought.

On the transport issue, I would like the Ministry of Works and Transport to carry out a deliberate research on the road network in the hard-to-reach areas. For example, they talked about Buhweju – there is a very big problem in Buhweju because of its topography. Construction of roads in Buhweju is not easy and it becomes very expensive for Government. So, a deliberate effort should be made by Government to construct roads –(*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. You know, on that issue of roads, if you go to, for example, my constituency, for example, and look at the nature of the rift valley, and you say the district should be in charge of roads, you wonder what you are talking about. – (*Laughter*)

The burden has shifted to me. I do not have any single Central Government road; they are all under local government. Now, the local government leaders say, “The Speaker is the one who appropriates money.” (*Laughter*) That is the kind of situation, and we are going into the rainy season.

Rt Hon. Prime Minister and Government Chief Whip, we are entering the rainy season. Ensure that every day, when we are having plenary here, the Works and Transport, as well as the Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees ministries are here. These are the questions you are going to be getting every day, yet we can prevent this. What is important is not the words we get here. That is why we are pushing the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development – can you release money to the Uganda Road Fund? This is the fund protected by the Constitution. The Attorney-General guided and the minister made a commitment.

So, Clerk, ensure that you put it on the Order Paper – I think on Thursday or next week. We want an update on the implementation of roads by the Uganda Road Fund, as committed by the minister here. (*Applause*) The Attorney-General guided and said the Uganda Road Fund is protected by the Constitution.

So, minister, you do not have any discretion of saying you aggregated it into other monies. The Attorney-General guided properly here. Therefore, please, let us have it on the Order Paper on Tuesday and the Minister for Finance, Planning and Economic Development should give us an update on the different funds that are protected by the Constitution.

Hon. Ndeezi, on the issue of merging the Equal Opportunities Commission, let us allow Government to do their work and then, they will come here. After all, it is a constitutional body. The final say will be here – if we are to amend the law. We shall coordinate and we see how best to work with the Executive so that we come up with a more feasible and acceptable solution to that issue.

5.06

MR JACOB KARUBANGA (NRM, Kibanda South County, Kiryandongo):

Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the Committee on Equal Opportunities for the report they have just presented, and I would like to make the following observations:

First, we have indigenous communities in Uganda that up to today are suffering just because they were never included in the Third Schedule of the 1995 Constitution of Uganda, and they have lived in total denial to the extent that they do not have national identity cards, which is a prerequisite to social services delivery. This matter was handled here in the 10th Parliament, but not concluded. I remember I sought leave of Parliament to present a Bill - which I did - but unfortunately, it was stayed with the purpose of waiting for the holistic constitutional amendments. These people are still suffering; for example, the Abagabo, Abakigwe, Bahaya, Maragoli, do

not have identity cards. They cannot open bank accounts; they cannot secure their pieces of land and several other things. This position needs to be reviewed.

Secondly, we have people whose land was expropriated by Government several years ago and up to today, they have never been resettled nor compensated or otherwise. I remember my senior, Hon. Helen Kahunde presenting a -*(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Kahunde, you can complete his point. *(Laughter)*

5.07

MS MARGARET MAKHOHA (Independent, Woman Representative, Namayingo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also thank the committee for the work well done. I would like to comment specifically on SAGE on page 22.

I agree with the committee's recommendation on reducing the age of the beneficiaries from 80 to 70, and if it can even be further reduced to below 70, the better.

You are aware that much as the life expectancy in Uganda stands at the age of 64, very few of our people live to celebrate their 80th birthday. It is very important that if Government has resources, they should consider reducing the age of the beneficiaries to 70 and even below.

It is also true that during the registration exercise for the national identity card, many of the elderly people could not remember the exact date when they were born. Most of them would give answers such as, "We were born during the other time, during the war, when it was raining," and it was at the discretion of the person who was in charge of helping them register to guess by mere looking at the physical appearance of that person. When this exercise of supporting these elderly people began, many of them eventually realised that they had been born earlier than what was captured on the national identity cards. Correcting this information on the national identity card is very tedious and most of our people have not been successful in

correcting this information. Therefore, they are not benefitting. If Government can find a way of -*(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is a very serious issue, honourable member. Honourable minister, you need to take very keen interest in it. It is countrywide.

There are some who are not supposed to be benefitting, but are benefitting because they increased their age. Then the elderly who did not have people to help them - you find an old woman of 90 saying she is 50 years old. That is what the identity card says. We need to use, especially the leadership of the elderly people, since we have structures up to village level. We should be able to identify these people up to the village level and assist them.

5.11

MS CHRISTINE APOLOT (NRM, Woman Representative, Kumi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am making a submission on the quota system. I would like to appreciate Government for this initiative because it is causing an impact in districts. I appreciate the process of identification of the beneficiaries, because if you go to the grassroots, people think that it is the local government leaders who identify the beneficiaries. My plea is that the process continues as it is, because it makes people understand that the genuine beneficiaries are the ones who got that offer.

However, on the loan scheme, it is very true that information about it normally reaches the districts very late and there is limited information that is given. You know that for a beneficiary to succeed, he or she has to pass through Centenary Bank. If possible, the process would entirely be under the district and districts have airtime given to the RDCs to go on radio and inform people in the district, when they can apply for this scheme.

Mr Speaker, districts also need to be guided - *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, on the issue of the loan scheme, I think

the challenge has been even the amount we are giving these people. We are not giving them enough money—we are just giving them peanuts. What is painful is that you find a student of, for example, Kitende, a student of Namagunga or Kisubi is on Government sponsorship. The fees they pay per term is higher than the money they pay at Makerere University. Whom does Government sponsorship benefit? Honourable minister, this is something you need to look at thoroughly. We could put that money under the district quota system, so that these poor districts benefit from the loan scheme. You can share. *(Applause)*

Hon. Sarah has reminded me that it is part of what she presented. I have been a member of the Makerere University Council. When you admit, you are admitting children of the rich. Then you can get another mechanism of - why should Tayebwa's child go on Government sponsorship? For God's sake why? That is being really - Well, some people can say he is bright. To me, the issue of being bright should be determined on courses. Also, on some of these courses, you need to do affirmative action. How come in Parliament you did affirmative action and the child who studied in Mitooma, from Primary One up to a higher level, is a Deputy Speaker? Didn't you appreciate me? *(Laughter)* If you give us a chance, we can survive and reach here, but if you keep suffocating these young children, it is going to be a problem.

Hon. Sarah has reminded me of the anticipation rule - Rule 80 applies to me because there is a motion, but it is something you need to look at thoroughly. *(Interjections)* Honourable colleagues, I am going to give you your time.

There are Members who have been here since we started and have not spoken. If you know you already have already spoken, please, sit down. I know this is a different matter, but first sit down.

5.16

MR RONALD NSUBUGA BALIMWEZO (NUP, Nakawa Division East, Kampala): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I wish to appreciate

the committee for the work well done, though I think the report did not cover equity in recruitment, particularly in the public service.

Whereas we appreciate the Ministry of Education and Sports standards in putting at least a primary school in every parish, and a seed secondary school in every subcounty, this is a raw deal, particularly for subcounties in urban areas.

For instance, Nakawa Division, which is referred to as a subcounty has over 500,000 people, yet, there are subcounties that have even 10,000. So, basically, we cannot use the same parameters. How I wish we could begin using population in allocating seed schools, other than the subcounty parameter because some of the subcounties we have are small and, therefore, do not qualify.

I would also like to appreciate Parliament - when we were paying tribute to the fallen Speaker, I requested Parliament to recruit a little person called Yubu, and to-date Yubu is employed by Parliament. I would like to appreciate you for that. *(Member timed out.)*

5.18

MS NAOME KABASHARIRA (Independent, Rushenyi County, Ntungamo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would also like to thank the committee for the good job done. However, I would like to be educated on what equal opportunities means. Do I understand it or it has lost either meaning? I do not know. I need to be educated on what it means.

In Ntungamo, we are around 570. When you go to Mitooma District, I think the population is around 190 or 200. When you use the quota system, Mitooma and Ntungamo districts will both get 80. So, how shall we measure that equal opportunity? That is why I asked what it means.

Even for local governments, still, Mitooma will be given machines for working on the roads - Mr Speaker, you are crying about the roads in Mitooma; I wish you could visit Ntungamo. This will serve the same one unit as Mitooma,

yet, we have six constituencies. Therefore, Mr Speaker, the committee needs to look into that too.

She talked about the international and national days. I would like to suggest that we just recognise these international days without wasting money. I call it wastage because people just go there to sit and talk.

And, on the national days like Women's Day, I would like to say this is always a burden to women. Why don't we leave it to the districts so that the money, which the ministry uses to organise the day, is sent to the districts; give it to those women and they *-(Member timed out.)*

5.19

MS MARGARET MAKOKHA (Independent, Woman Representative Namayingo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I take this opportunity to appreciate the committee for the report presented. However, as Chairperson, Uganda Parliamentary Forum for Children, I am not seeing my children catered for in this report.

I am saying this because the children are our inheritance and the future generation. So, if we fail to look at how to protect them, it means the future is not fit for us or that we shall miss out.

Mr Speaker, this House gives 0.01 per cent of the resources to child protection in this country. I would like to reiterate that that money is very little for us to protect the children. That is why we are seeing the law enforcement officers across the country all suffocating. It is because they do not have resources to fight for the rights of our children.

I pray and ask this House to give a conditional grant to the child protection units to help them at least fight for our future generation. When you talk about benefiting from Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVCs), you realise that the money for children and youth is put together, but most of it goes to the youth.

Why should we plan and invest in the youth, but leave out the children whom we should target first at the primary moment so that by the

time they become youth, they are in a position to do something meaningful for themselves?

I, therefore, request the Committee on Equal Opportunities to recommend clearly that we give a conditional grant to child protection structures so that *-(Member timed out.)*

5.21

DR ABED BWANIKA (NUP, Kimaanya-Kabonera Division, Masaka City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to appreciate and thank those who compiled this report. I wish to emphasise that in the cities, we request that parishes, which are wards, be serviced as subcounties, in terms of education. The population is high, yet, we are left out when it comes to secondary education.

Secondly, in the report, it is reported that our population is around 40 million. This has created problems because recently, when the President was giving us information that we have been elevated to the middle class status, the international community were saying that we are 47 or 48 million.

My opinion is that Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) should be funded and asked to do a population census so that we base our planning not just on those estimates, but the actual population. This will help us to know the different categories in the population, for instance, the PWDs. It will further help us in the planning process; we should not be estimating.

When will UBOS do the right population census to guide us in our planning?

I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

5.23

MS HANIFA NABUKEERA (NUP, Woman Representative, Mukono): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee for the report presented.

I also concur with the recommendations, but I have some proposed amendments. The first amendment is about simplifying the mode of

payment for the elderly people because they stay faraway, and given their age of 80 or 75 and above, I guess they could receive money on their phones. This will save them from that movement to those centres where they are supposed to receive money from.

Secondly, we have money in arrears. I urge Government to pay up-to-date and increase the amounts paid to the elderly.

Thirdly, I support the increment to the Youth Livelihood Fund and the Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme (UWEP), so that these funds can be properly utilised. Thank you and I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I have not seen any person from UPC speaking. So, I will allow one to say something.

5.25

MS SANDRA SANTA ALUM (UPC, Woman Representative, Oyam): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Allow me join my colleagues in thanking the Committee on Equal Opportunities for presenting a very good report. Equal Opportunities speaks to the issue of marginalisation, imbalances and discrimination in our country. How I wish that they could frequently present such reports.

I remember one time, when we were sitting as the Appointments Committee we had a complaint on the issue of recruitment. I have not seen it captured here; most especially about the children of the poor who normally do not get the same opportunities with others.

Mr Speaker, I would like to applaud them for making a very important recommendation on the Social Assistance Grant for Empowerment (SAGE). I support them by saying that, indeed, when you look for women aged 80 years, you do not find them. How I wish Government would take this up.

The gender minister is here - I want to plead with her that as a ministry, the women are not there. If this age could be reduced to 65 years, many women will be captured. This money

does not only benefit the women, but also the children and many others.

Finally, Mr Speaker, on the issue of education where you find that when results for final examinations are released, the marginalised communities and rural schools are the ones trailing. They have recommended textbooks, but I would like to recommend further that even computers must be given to these rural schools so that when we want to –(*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: *Maama* Cecilia Ogwal? Honourable Colleagues, there is another report coming. I am taking note. I am allowing another report and I know, colleagues, you are going to submit. It will also be marketable like this. I am taking notes.

5.27

MS CECILIA OGWAL (FDC, Woman Representative, Dokolo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like, first of all, to use a few seconds of my time to congratulate the Government Chief Whip who has appeared as a Chief Whip today. I would like to appreciate that, at least now, we have the real Chief Whip in the House because he or she has always been represented. Today, we have a real one. Thank you.

I appreciate the report and I am happy about the few issues that have been raised. However, let us address the critical issues of equal opportunity. It is important that, the committee first studies Chapter Four of the Constitution, because the Equal Opportunities Act is anchored on that Chapter.

Therefore, we need to highlight where we have fallen short - protection of the poor, protection of the vulnerable and also to prevent deprivation. Land grabbing is rampant in the country. How have you addressed it? How have you addressed the issue of land grabbing because that is deprivation? That is a critical issue.

Mr Speaker, I know that Parliament did a good job –(*Member timed out.*)

5.29

MS BRENDA NABUKENYA (NUP, Woman Representative, Luwero): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will limit myself to education issues. First of all, I would like to thank the chairperson of the committee for the report and also advise the Ministry of Education and Sports that according to the issues raised here, we need to revise the policy in regard to allocation of schools.

They have cited population and distance. I will give an example. In Bukasa here – that is Makindye Division - we have only one Government-aided school, but the population is very big. That means that majority of the poor urban children cannot access education. Either, they drop out or do not go to school.

In the policy, new mapping should be done because population is not static; it is changing all the time. You need to map all the areas all the time so that you can be able to provide quality education to all Ugandans.

I thought this report would also capture accessibility in regard to pre-primary education, especially in the rural areas. We need to know if the young rural learners are accessing it because it is part of the foundation and it is lacking. I hope in your next report, you will be able to study that area.

Mr Speaker, when it comes to the Students' Loan Scheme, this scheme is ring-fenced for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects at degree and diploma levels; meaning that with a conditioned scheme, learners who go at the level of, for example, certificate - Most of the poor actually drop out of school because they cannot access –(*Member timed out.*)

5.31

MS AGNES TAAKA (NRM, Woman Representative, Bugiri): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I request that you grant me one minute because ever since you took up that seat, it is my first time to speak. So, I take the opportunity first to congratulate you.

I also thank you and all colleagues who were able to reach out to me when my life was in danger. Thank you very much. Today, is the first day I have reported to Parliament, and I am now in good health. (*Applause*) I thank all of you. I will not mention specific names, but you really stood with me. Thank you very much.

Mr Speaker, I would like to thank the chairperson and all Members for the report that you have presented to us, and all the issues that you have mentioned, because they are all crucial.

We need to take time and have a comprehensive debate on how we can create a balance in this country and hold the hands of the disadvantaged so that the person who is in the deepest village of this country – I will take an example of Budhaya Subcounty in my district - can access the same education, same healthcare and same services like the privileged, so that we do not have people moving to the urban – (*Member timed out.*)

5.33

MR STEPHEN KISA (NRM, Luuka South County, Luuka): Thank you, Mr Speaker. First of all, I thank the chairperson and the committee for the report, and I recommend that the report be adopted.

Mr Speaker, I have one issue about non-communicable diseases. Equal opportunities cater for imbalances in this country and we have people with chronic illnesses like diabetes and high blood pressure. However, in the health sector, such people are not given an opportunity to receive treatment in all health centres. Treatment is restricted mainly to hospitals and the national or regional referral hospitals.

This treatment is very expensive, Mr Speaker. For somebody to be treated for diabetes or high blood pressure, he or she has to dig deep in their pockets. If we are to embrace equal opportunities in healthcare, therefore, I recommend that for such people, services and drugs be provided in the health centres III and

IV before they are referred to other levels for treatment. I thank you.

5.35

MR BONIFACE OKOT (NRM, Youth Representative, Northern): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I salute the Committee on Equal Opportunities for -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Colleagues, just take heart. Our rules are very clear. When you are a member of a committee, you do not submit on the business of the committee *-(Applause)-* and I have your names here - I know you. Please, do not feel bad. Do not say that I am refusing to give you an opportunity. Those are our rules.

MR BONIFACE OKOT: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I take this opportunity to salute the Committee on Equal Opportunities for this elaborate report. However, this report makes mention and recommendations to the social sector development programmes that are proposed for collapse and transfer to the Parish Development Model. Two cases in point are the Youth Livelihood Programme and Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme (UWEP).

It is very important, Mr Speaker, that Government rests our fears regarding the status of the Youth Livelihood Programme and UWEP. I, therefore, recommend that:

1. As a country, we must build a culture of not collapsing one programme for another without a phase-out strategy because we are risking undoing the gains of all these programmes that we continue to build.
2. Now that the Parish Development Model has failed to kick-start, we should instead reinstate -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, it will start. *(Laughter)*

MR BONIFACE OKOT: Mr Speaker, the reason I am making this case -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No. Do not base your submission on the Parish Development Model. Just make your submission.

MR BONIFACE OKOT: Mr Speaker. The reason I am making this case is that these programmes are being collapsed to feed the Parish Development Model and as it stands now, we are probably missing out on many months without the young people benefiting from the Youth Livelihood Programme – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, conclude. I interfered with your time.

MR BONIFACE OKOT: These young people are seeking - because we have groups that have benefited from these programmes, we are saying that as we wait for the Parish Development Model to begin, can we, in the meantime, continue having these programmes ongoing for the benefit of the young people?

Thirdly, I would like us to allow the gender minister time to share with this House all the social sector development funds that are available and the status of these funds, so that we can make our input such that young people who benefit from these programmes are able to benefit in a manner that the Members think will benefit them. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I will have Hon. Itungo, Hon. Timuzigu – Hon. Maximus Ochai was first.

5.39

MR MAXIMUS OCHAI (NRM, West Budama County North, Tororo): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity. I rise to comment specifically on affirmative action in the education sector.

The committee produced a comprehensive report, and for the proposed affirmative action in the education sector, I would like to add that in addition to ensuring there is universal access to the loan scheme - that recommendation assumes that Uganda is homogeneous, which unfortunately is not the case.

In that respect, I thought the committee would have thought outside the box and factored in grants and bursaries to take care of those who are financially needy, but qualifying for higher education. Therefore, my recommendation would be that bursaries be given to those who are from very poor backgrounds as long as they have got the capacity and the will to study. I thank you.

5.40

MR NATHAN TUMWESIGYE (Independent, Kashari South County, Mbarara): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to use one minute to congratulate my brother; Hon. Obua who has been our minister. As a member of the Committee on Education and Sports, we have supported him and he has performed well as a minister. Uganda is now visible on the world map because of the performance of the athletes. My brother, congratulations!

I would like to talk about the loan scheme. We have had issues with the loan scheme with regard to the arts students. Mr Speaker, this scheme is for science students who go to first class schools. When you are in Buddo and you get 18 and above, you are admitted on the Government scheme at Makerere University. Those who get 17, 16 or 13 and were doing sciences at Buddo are the ones who apply and are admitted on the loan scheme. The poor boy in the village, without laboratories, and who has struggled to do arts, cannot access this loan scheme. Therefore, our recommendation has been that they should open up; whether you are doing sciences or arts - after all, it is a loan, you are all going to pay.

Two, Government should not waste time – Government is struggling with these Government sponsored students at universities without living out allowances. You have been seeing strikes. Our recommendation has been that all the money, which Government invests in the Government sponsored students be put in the loan scheme so that everybody can struggle and study. Otherwise, I thank the chairperson and the team for a good report. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have an interest in the chairpersons of the committees on HIV/AIDS and Related Matters, and that on Health, because the work they do is what is being discussed.

Chairperson of the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs, we have an issue to do with Karamoja. I would like you to comment on it. In fact, I have marked you for that issue.

5.42

MR MICHAEL TIMUZIGU (NRM, Kajara County, Ntungamo): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I take this opportunity to congratulate my brother, Hon. Obua – *(A Member rose)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Sarah is giving me - but the women MPs have spoken. Go on Hon. Timuzigu.

MR TIMUZIGU: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I congratulate my brother, Hon. Obua, for ascending to the office of the Government Chief Whip. I believe God is going to give you courage and capacity to do that job as usual.

I thank the chairperson together with the committee members for delivering on this report. My submission is about the Community Development Officers (CDOs).

The committee recommends that Government facilitates CDOs with transport. Mr Speaker, this has been their complaint for a long time. At the end of the day, they end up charging the beneficiaries of the funds. Therefore, as we implement the Parish Development Model - our people will be charged by the CDOs for their services and that is extremely dangerous. Therefore, we have to ensure that these CDOs are facilitated with transport and accommodation, because in some areas, they travel for long distances.

There is an issue concerning some districts that have no knowledge about the youth Capital Venture Fund, like in Napak. It is extremely unfortunate that some districts do not know about this programme. In addition to that, some

youth do not even know the ventures to start. Money comes in, but they do not know the projects to start - *(Member timed out.)*

5.45

MR MARTIN MUZAALE (NRM, Buzaaya County, Kamuli): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will begin with the social assistance grant that we are giving to the old people. The committee has proposed to reduce the age from 80 to 70 for men and from 80 to 65 for the women. I would like to think that it is not proper for the committee that is working on equal opportunities to begin by discriminating against one gender. *(Applause)*

Secondly, as we speak today, inflation is very high. The Shs 25,000 is too small. I suggest that the committee adopts some amendments and we increase it to a minimum of Shs 50,000.

On the issue of the student loan scheme, if today we asked for the list and looked at Busoga alone, we may not even have 10 children from there that qualify for that scheme, yet, they apply. Busoga is well-known for doing sciences. *(Laughter)* It is on record, but not even 10 children have qualified. The issue of a quota system is, therefore, very paramount in this case.

Mr Speaker, I implore the committee to look at the issue of salary discrimination. Today, the Committee on –*(Member timed out.)*

5.47

DR CHARLES AYUME (NRM, Koboko Municipality, Koboko): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee for the report.

I would like to give you information that Government of Uganda continues to prioritise construction of health centres III. Over the last five years, we have constructed 351 health centres III. However, sometimes creation of new subcounties outstrips the construction. Therefore, much as we have tried to achieve 351 in the last five years, more administrative units are being created, which increases the gap. The average cost is anywhere between Shs

500-900 million, for setting-up a functional maternity unit.

I would also like to know health centres where male and females are sharing wards, cognisant of the fact that sometimes, districts take it upon themselves to repurpose some old administrative units into health facilities. However, we have a standard, as Government and as Ministry of Health, for what constitutes a ward, and the standard clearly separates the male and female departments.

Finally, on the issue of non-communicable diseases, we prioritise it up to the grassroots facilities – whether it is cancer or not. We are decentralising to regional levels.

We also have drugs to health centres III and IV for diabetes and heart diseases. We are also prioritising recruitment of health educators and inspectors because we think the prevention aspect is quite important. I just wanted to give that information. Thank you.

5.49

MS SARAH NETALISIRE (NRM, Woman Representative, Namisindwa): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee for the report.

I would like to comment on equal access to health in two areas. The first is with our children who are suffering from hydrocephalus and spina bifida. These are children who have big heads, as we locally know it. Accessing treatment is very difficult for these children.

Many of our Government hospitals do not handle these cases. Parents of these children also find it very challenging to access treatment for their children. They are always referred to private hospitals like Cure in Mbale or Jinja. Therefore, I appeal to Government that for us to have equal access to health, these children should be considered.

Secondly, as the Chairperson for the Committee on HIV/ AIDS, during our assessment, we discovered that there is an increase in infections in the population. However, because

of discrimination and stigma that surrounds what they do and believe in, they normally hide and fail to access treatment.

If we are speaking about equal opportunities and there is an equal right to access to health, we need to find means of catering for this category of people.

Lastly, on equal distribution of resources, you talked here very well about your region - the terrain of your roads. You are from a mountainous area - *(Member timed out.)*

6.01

MR HENRY KIBALYA (NRM, Bugabula County South, Kamuli): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Colleagues have congratulated *Ndugu* Obua. I have got regards – *Ndugu* Obua went through a secondary school, which the Rt Hon. Rebecca Kadaga studied from. So, she has asked me to convey her regards and congratulations to him, since she is his old girl (OG). *(Laughter)*

Mine are on two areas. First, the seed schools are given to a subcounty. There are subcounties with a parish, those with three and those with 10 parishes. However, collectively, whether a subcounty has a parish, three or 10 parishes, they consider it a subcounty and give it a seed school, which disadvantages most students that we need to help.

The chairperson also talked about skilling Uganda, which was started by His Excellency the President. Unfortunately, the programme only ended in Kampala and the surrounding areas, yet it could have benefitted most of our people from Kamuli, Karamoja and all other areas upcountry.

This is an area that I request we take note of. If skilling Uganda is to be meaningful, can we have it rolled out upcountry instead of having it only in Kampala? It is only in the four divisions of Kampala.

Therefore, since the minister is here and the chairperson has hinted on it, we request that the minister and the Members concerned ensure

skilling Uganda is rolled out upcountry as well, in order to support disadvantaged communities. Thank you.

6.02

MS HELEN NAKIMULI (NUP, Woman Representative, Kalangala): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee for the work well done. My captain talked about distribution of resources fairly. When it comes to payment of civil servants – Kalangala District is an island district. I think when they hear “Kalangala Town Council”, they think it is somewhere in Kampala. *(Laughter)*

Kalangala Town Council’s civil servants are given different allowances as compared to those in the deeper islands. It would, therefore, be fair if civil servants in Kalangala Town Council also receive hard-to-reach allowances like others do. It is only those in the faraway islands that receive it, yet these ones also travel on water to go and work. It is unfair.

On page 24, they talked about poverty and insecurity, but the committee did not give us recommendations. I do not know why, but I think one of the recommendations is that we should reinstate YLP, UWEP and SAGE to ensure that the poor people are reached.

When we talk about - our good minister here, Hon. Kasolo, has visited Kalangala and taught our people about *Emyooga*, but the Microfinance Centre - the funds we get from there – *(Member timed out.)*

6.04

MS ANNET KATUSIIME (NRM, Woman Representative, Bushenyi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Allow me to thank the chairperson of the committee for the comprehensive report. Fortunately, I was in Bushenyi when they visited the district and I moved with them to different institutions.

Allow me to put emphasis on schools for PWDs. We have very few schools for PWDs. However, those schools are not given priority. For example, they have talked about the school in Bushenyi; the ironsheets are very old and

are even leaking, while the structures are dilapidated.

I would like to ask the honourable minister, with due respect, to take a proactive approach and send technocrats to look at those structures. Otherwise, since it has started raining, a calamity is expected to happen. I would like to assure you that these schools are in a bad state. Please, visit those schools in the entire country, not only in Bushenyi, and see the situation, and attend to them. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

6.06

MR PATRICK OSHABE (NUP, Kassanda County North, Kassanda): Mr Speaker, thank you for giving me the opportunity. I have heard everyone thanking the committee, but I am one of those who are disappointed with the committee report. This is not a sectoral committee that is expected to give details, such as reporting on latrines. This committee should be a policy committee. They should present to us how Government has streamlined matters of equal opportunities for the stakeholders in every sector. However, they are instead talking about pit latrines. The other day, they talked about something else. They are all over, yet, there are specific committees that are responsible for reporting such issues in those sectors.

I will give an example; on the matter of the loan scheme. Just pick your report and read what they have given us. They should have told us what the loan scheme has done to ensure that equal opportunities are given to all Ugandans. Then, they present to us what they advised them to do to ensure that equal opportunities reach everyone, but they are instead telling us about specific individuals in different districts.

I think this committee can do better by looking at all sectors; and recommending how imbalances can be cured. *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister for Gender, let us have your responses. Please, keep them short because we shall expect a report. Honourable minister, before you come, the Leader of the Opposition has requested to make some remarks.

6.09

THE CHIEF OPPOSITION WHIP (Mr John Baptist Nambeshe): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will commence with the formulation of the policy on special needs because I am one of those about to receive a petition from special needs teachers, after the salary enhancement of scientists. They are complaining bitterly because we –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: You are about to?

MR NAMBESHE: Yes, I am about to –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Are you working together?

MR NAMBESHE: They have already reached out to me.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay.

MR NAMBESHE: That policy formulation is dragging; it has taken too long; Government should expedite the process.

Mr Speaker, there is a fund, which was created in the Ministry of Public Service. It is a 30 per cent hard-to-reach fund. A number of districts, including Bududa, were supposed to be beneficiaries of this fund.

The issues of marginalised groups in hard-to-reach areas like Bududa – we would be benefitting from this fund, but up to now, its implementation has taken ages. We do not seem to be seeing any funds coming in soon, to those that have been waiting for ages.

You know very well - I have just seen the teacher to pupil ratio in Napak at 1:91. However, if you come to places like Bududa, where about five schools were closed because they are in places surrounded with cracks, the ratio is even worse; it is 1:150.

The planning for these proposed affirmative action programmes is very poor. They are designed in such a way that they are mere token packages, but not for empowerment, because we do not see any capacity or capabilities being

built out of these programmes. They come in political seasons - like the recent *Emyooga* - and the recipients treat them like they are political tokens. That is why you find that they hardly bear fruit; they are even highly partisan.

You are aware, Mr Speaker, that the RDCs and chairpersons of NRM are the ones that are normally in charge of these affirmative action programmes. That is why they end up being abused.

I will conclude with the loan scheme. The northern region was mentioned. Mr Speaker, I seek your indulgence to have a list of the regional beneficiaries of this loan scheme furnished to this House so that we know who these beneficiaries are. This is because someone from the west can come and benefit through the east. Please, through your office, let this House be furnished with a list of the beneficiaries of this loan scheme. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I hope the intention is not knowing who is where. I remember when we were at campus, we had - and he is a senior police officer now called Odur Byaruhanga. We had a situation where one senior politician on the Opposition side attacked him when they were in Gulu, saying how this Munyankore is now benefitting from the Acholi things. It turned out that Byaruhanga could not even speak "*Agandi*." He was a true Acholi. That person was a senior leader here and I remember the embarrassment of following a name. They followed just Byaruhanga, not knowing he was dealing with his Acholi brother, whom he was about to slaughter.

I know many Bagisu. The Runyankore that Hon. Richard Wanda speaks, some of us cannot speak it. When you hear him speak, you will slaughter him as a Munyankore, but he is a senior Mugisu who even participated in *Imbalu*. With some of these things, we have to be cautious, colleagues.

Nonetheless, it is very important that the list should be presented so that it is verifiable. There is nothing to hide. Honourable minister,

please, present that list so that it can be referred to the Committee on Education and Sports. Members can then be able to verify it. It is very important.

Honourable minister, please, use a maximum of five minutes.

6.11

THE MINISTER OF GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (Ms Betty Amongi): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee for the observations and recommendations contained in their report.

The issues raised on social services, which captured the issue of poor service delivery, inadequate access by vulnerable communities and groups, issues of the loan scheme and its accessibility, and issues of how people should access services in a balanced manner have all been noted.

You are aware that the role of the Equal Opportunities Commission is to ensure balanced development, balanced access to services, as well as equal opportunities for everybody in recruitment, in placement, and in all the other services offered by Government.

We are going to study the report of the committee with members of the Equal Opportunity Commission and we will be able to report to Parliament on the detailed issues that have been raised in the report and those from the Members of Parliament.

We note issues raised in respect to ethnic minorities, which the Equal Opportunities Commission has visited, compiled and made recommendations, on how each of these should be dealt with, including issues of access to identity cards. This was discussed yesterday in the Cabinet. It was on how issues of ethnic minorities and those not in the Constitution should be addressed in the exercise, which is about to begin.

I have noted issues of grants and financial support programmes for the vulnerable groups plus issues of SAGE, where Parliament requires

lowering the age, increase in the amounts paid and, payment of the arrears; I have noted that.

The ministry has assessed all the financial implications of lowering the age from 75 to 70, 65 to 60 or if we increase from 25 to 30, or up to 50,000. And, in our assessment, it will be very difficult to sustain. If we are to lower it from 70 years to 50 years - we are discussing this and we are going to make recommendations to Cabinet.

Regarding the Youth Livelihood Programme or UWEP, Youth Venture Capital Fund, the Persons with Disability Grants, and the Enterprise Fund for the Elderly, all these funds relating to issues that have been raised by my colleagues have been noted.

I assure you that the grants that are in existence - the affirmative action grants are based on clear guidelines. There is no prejudice in respect to access. That is why I see that all the Members of this august House, from both sides, have appreciated, contributed and made proposals on measures to make sure that they are either scaled-up or there is increase in accessibility. Therefore, there is no issue of saying people access it based on their party.

On issues of poverty, discrimination, inequalities and imbalances that have been raised in the report, these are issues that have been studied by the Equal Opportunities Commission and we have annual reports on each of these sectors.

Mr Speaker, I will present the annual reports here so that there is more scrutiny of all the issues that have been raised. There are issues relating to special needs education in terms of arrears. All the issues raised are contained in the annual report of the Committee on Equal Opportunities. I will bring the report here so that there is more discussion on that.

Otherwise, Mr Speaker, I would like to thank colleagues for their interest and support in respect to how to entrench legal policy, guidelines and standards to uplift the standards of living of the vulnerable groups and ensure that we address inequality. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable minister. Colleagues, I now put the question that the Report of the Committee on Equal Opportunities on the State of Equal Opportunities in Selected Sectors and Affirmative Action Programmes be adopted. Oh, there are amendments. Let me repeat for clarity – no, honourable ministers, this report covered very many areas. The gender minister is going to coordinate with other ministers - this is a multi-sectoral report - to ensure the recommendations are implemented and responses prepared. Otherwise, if every minister is to come here to respond, we would take a very long time.

I put the question that the Report of the Committee on Equal Opportunities on: The state of Equal Opportunities in selected sectors and affirmative action programmes be adopted with amendments.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Chairperson of the committee, thank you, for your report. However, I would like you to go back and look at rule 183(4). You are supposed to report twice on this Floor.

Therefore, what happened in the last session - this is a report for the last session, we expect you to prepare a report for the next session. We expect these reports to come in time so that we handle them in time.

Honourable Minister, as per rule 220 of our Rules of Procedure, you are required to bring an action-taken report within three months. Please, link up with all the sectors.

Clerk to Parliament, please, extract all action-taken reports, which the ministers are supposed to bring here so that we do not always pass resolutions in vain. When we pass resolutions, people go and rest, yet, action is supposed to be taken. I need you to extract all the resolutions we made or reports adopted so that we can have action-taken reports submitted here.

MS ALYEK: Thank you, Mr Speaker; I will do as you have guided.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON
DEFENCE AND INTERNAL AFFAIRS
ON FIELD VISITS TO GOVERNMENT
PRISONS AND PRISONS FARMS

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Chairperson of the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs, you have strictly 20 minutes. So, just go to observations and recommendations.

6.13

MR MILTON MUWUMA (NRM, Kigulu County South, Iganga): Thank you, Mr Speaker. This is a Report of the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs on field visits to Government prisons and prison farms.

Mr Speaker, permit me -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Chairperson, those are in the report. Just go to the observations and recommendations so that we can have time to debate. I would like every colleague who has not spoken to speak to this report.

MR MUWUMA: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Congestion and overcrowding in prisons

The committee noted that overcrowding is an outstanding problem for the prisons management in the country. Congestion is an average of 339 per cent with some prisons housing above five times their designed housing capacities as detailed below.

Mr Speaker, that is tabulated and we made reference to some of the prisons like Bushenyi, Mbarara, Masindi, Kiruhura, Lira, Rukungiri, Ndorwa, Kakiika, Fort Portal, Kitgum, Bushenyi. Masaka Ssaza and Upper Prison.

The committee observes that overcrowding in prisons relates to challenges in the judicial system. For instance, shortage of judicial staff, prosecution officers, investigators, missing court files and few high court sessions.

In addition, unnecessary adjournments by judges greatly negate the trial process by cases dragging on in courts for a long time, leading to the high number of un-convicted offenders in prison custody, who eventually contribute to a rise in population in prisons.

The committee further noted that another cause of congestion in prison institutions in the country is the presence of a large number of prisoners who have been sentenced to death over the years, but have never been executed.

This growing prison population has overstretched existing physical facilities and puts pressure on services like water, leading to unhygienic conditions and other unacceptable behaviours.

The committee noted that delivery of justice is a coordinated process in the Justice, Law and Order Sector where departments within the sector have to be aligned and coordinated simultaneously to perform all activities in the process.

The committee also noted that in some prison facilities like Katojo Prison in Kabarole District, juveniles were imprisoned together with adults instead of in remand homes, thereby increasing congestion in the prisons. However, the committee was informed that this was as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic where prisoners were restricted to particular facilities to avoid the spread of COVID-19.

Recommendations

1. The Prison Service development budget should be increased to enable rehabilitation, expansion and construction of more prisons to accommodate the increasing number of prisoners and reduce on congestion in the available facilities;

2. Courts of law should employ alternatives to imprisonment such as community service, suspended sentence and affordable fines to ensure that petty offenders do not congest prisons;
3. The Advisory committee on the prerogative of mercy whose task is to advise the President, as per Article 121 of the Constitution, should make recommendations regarding the death penalty given that since 1999, no executions have been carried out, yet more prisoners have been sentenced to death;
4. Government should appoint more judges and magistrates to increase on the frequency of court sessions as a way of reducing the backlog of cases;
5. In line with the law, remands whose cases lack sufficient evidence should be given bail as prosecution gathers more evidence;
6. Government should develop the National Corrections Policy to guide transformation from penal to productive corrections. Community participation should be promoted in corrections and involvement of the private sector and non-state actors in the offender reintegration process; and
7. Government should strengthen collaboration with actors in the criminal justice system to reduce the number of prisoners on remand..

The committee observed that over 7,121 staff that is 50 percent, are not properly housed. Some prison staff still reside in uniports, canteens, makeshift structures and other stay-in houses roofed with asbestos sheets, which have been prohibited worldwide because of the health dangers that they pose to inhabitants.

The committee was informed that some prison officers spend part of their meagre salaries on renting houses outside the barracks, while others who cannot afford are forced to stay with their families in congested and dilapidated structures.

As more administration units are created, some staff share houses, which are quite small and cannot accommodate their families properly. These poor housing conditions do not only infringe on the rights of prisons officers, but also lowers their morale.

The committee appreciated the ongoing construction and renovation of accommodation facilities in some few prisons. However, there is still a lot to be done to improve the accommodation facilities of prison officers.

The committee recommends that prisons management should prioritise construction of low-cost housing units and phasing, using the incremental approach as a multi-year project for decent staff accommodation.

Government should urgently provide funds to replace asbestos sheets with iron sheets because it is a health hazard to the occupants.

Inadequate staff housing and accommodation

The committee observed that poor housing and working conditions of prisons staff, especially those of the lower cadres, reduces their morale, and are unable to fully dedicate themselves to working in such unbearable conditions.

It is ironical to note that the same prison officers, who are supposed to rehabilitate the prisoners, suffer the same consequences as prisoners.

Mistreatment of prisoners

The committee was informed that deliberate physical and psychological mistreatment of inmates is a pervasive and persistent issue of concern. According to inmates, pre-trial detainees are often at a risk of being mistreated because they are under the control of the detaining authorities who may perceive torture and other forms of ill-treatment as the easiest and fastest way to obtain information or extract confessions.

Officers in charge delegate representatives from among detainees to handle discipline issues on their behalf. These are the ones who, in most cases, mistreat fellow prisoners. Prisoners informed the committee that the common methods of torture and mistreatment included beating, reduction of food ratios and denial of medical treatment.

The committee recommends that:

1. The Committee on Human Rights should follow up on the matter with a view of establishing more facts in relation to torture and mistreatment of prisoners;
2. As an institutional measure, prisons authorities should strengthen the monitoring department to periodically interface with the inmates to identify issues that affect them; and
3. Prisons officers in charge should also play their role of supervision instead of delegating selected prisoners to discharge duties on their behalf.

Inadequate legal representation of prisoners

The committee observed that prisoners are faced with a challenge of legal representation because most of them are poor and cannot afford to pay legal fees. In most cases, some of the offenders are not aware of their rights because they are perceived to be on the wrong side of the law. Some of the offenders, who do not have adequate knowledge, are forced to abide with the outcome of court proceedings without understanding what it entails.

The committee was informed that they are not given time to discuss their cases with lawyers to give them the details of the offences.

The committee was informed that there are arrangements made between the Uganda Prisons Service and the Uganda Law Society to provide legal aid services to inmates. However, they are still inadequate due to a high number of criminal cases.

Hard-to-reach areas do not receive legal representation due to inadequate facilitation.

The committee was further informed by inmates that they were advised to accept plea bargain settlement without informing them of the consequences, as they are perceived to be guilty. This was noted to have caused bias and limited appreciation of the reform by prisoners.

Recommendations

1. Government should honour its obligation to provide legal services to criminal offenders as its duty to provide it;
2. Justice, Law and Order sectors should urge lawyers to take on capital offenses rather than minor offences when providing legal representation under pro bono services to the offenders; and
3. Government should fast-track the Legal Aid Bill so as to have an enabling law in place; and
4. Government should prioritise sensitisation on plea bargain reforms for it to be appreciated.

Distance between prisons and courts of law

The committee observed that due to misalignment of criminal justice agencies, there are long distances between prison facilities and courts of law. This results in huge costs to Government in terms of fuel and maintenance of vehicles, delayed production of prisoners in courts, and also a barrier to justice on the side of prisoners. Most challenges are encountered during implementation of urgent court directives to produce prisoners in court, especially when there is no standby transport and other logistics.

The committee recommends that the location of adjudicating courts of law should be well planned so as to be in proximity with prisons facilities, and reduce the distance inmates have to travel to court.

The committee further recommends that more vehicles should be purchased and provided with sufficient fuel to ensure timely delivery of inmates to courts.

Land grabbing

Observations

Uganda Prisons Service has continued to encounter challenges of land grabbing by private investors and groups of local people due to lack of regularised tenancy agreements. Most of this land is neither surveyed nor titled, which exposes it to illegal encroachment by private investors and groups of local people.

For example, part of the land belonging to the Ruimi Prison farm was occupied by a group of encroachers who have claimed it and the matter is in court. Most of the land belonging to Uganda Prisons Service is not fenced, exposing it to grabbing and insecurity of prisoners and prisons officers.

The committee observed that Uganda Prisons Service has not benefitted much from the Public-Private Partnership arrangement.

Recommendations

1. The committee recommends that Uganda Prisons Service management should expedite the land surveying and title acquisition process to avoid future encroachments on the prisons land;
2. Uganda Land Commission (ULC) should stop giving away prison land to private developers who do not pay returns to the Uganda Prisons Service;
3. Government should provide funds to fence prisons and prisons farms to prevent land grabbing and provide security; and
4. Prisons management should consider planting trees around boundaries of prisons land as a tentative measure.

Gender and equity mainstreaming

There are different categories of persons in prisons that need special care. These include sick prisoners and staff, female staff, pregnant mothers, children and persons living with HIV/AIDS, whose needs vary by category. HI/AIDS prevalence rate among prisoners is 15 per cent and 12.5 per cent among staff.

Female prisoners receive inadequate sanitary towels and underwear. In addition, female prisoners' accommodation does not match the required standards for keeping mothers with children. There are no special wards for breastfeeding mothers and care centres for pregnant mothers. Some inmates stay with their children up to four years in cells, which is against the section 59 of the Prisons Act, that restricts children to stay with mothers up to only 18 months.

The committee recommends that gender should be mainstreamed in all prisons activities to increase gender sensitivity of the prisoners; and the gender monitoring office should be strengthened to monitor integration of gender in prison life and activities.

Night soil bucket system

The committee noted with concern the use of a night soil bucket system in some prison facilities. The committee further noted that some inmates are kept in uniports, which do not have water borne facilities. This poses sanitation challenges not only to the prisoners, but also to the prison wardens. A case in point is Lore Prison, where inmates still use buckets.

The committee recommends that the Uganda Prisons Service should provide adequate sanitary facilities and totally eliminate the night soil bucket system in all prisons in Uganda.

Uganda Prisons Service should consider using biodigesters and also construct permanent pit latrines.

Rehabilitation programmes in the Uganda Prisons Service

Rehabilitation and reformation of offenders is one of the core functions of the Uganda Prisons Service. It comprises a number of various interventions and mechanisms that are employed in various fields to provide purposeful activities for prisoners to challenge their offending behaviours, provide basic education to tackle illiteracy and equip them with life and work skills.

In order to ensure that the prisoners are reformed during their incarceration and properly rehabilitated into society as law-abiding citizens, the Uganda Prisons Service has embarked on a number of programmes to empower prisoners to achieve social rehabilitation such as agriculture, tailoring, and carpentry, among others, in order to impart skills to the inmates and prepare them to face life after they have served their sentence.

Whereas the prison administration has made great strides in improving lives of inmates under their custody, the administration still experiences insufficient funding to cater for training and rehabilitation programmes for inmates. This has rendered many of them idle.

His Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda directed that all Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies to procure furniture from the Uganda Prisons Service in order to boost its production. The committee, however, noted that whereas it is a good idea to encourage and promote local consumption of furniture, the Uganda Prisons Service does not have the capacity to produce the required furniture for all Government agencies. This is because the Prisons administration has inadequate funding, limited space for production; and inadequate and obsolete equipment. In addition, the Uganda Prisons Service relies on manpower provided by inmates, who are not well-trained in carpentry and joinery to produce furniture that can compete with imported ones.

The committee recommends that Government enhances budgetary allocations for Uganda

Prisons Service to boost implementation of the Presidential directive, as well as funding for rehabilitation programmes to improve the lives of inmates while in custody and thereafter.

Agricultural production

Uganda Prisons Service continues to pursue agricultural activities as an essential component of its operations in areas of food, cash crop production and livestock. The committee appreciates the commendable work that is being done by prisons farms. A tour to different prisons indicated that Uganda Prisons Service remains one of the Government institutions with the largest acreage of land in the country.

Agriculture production in Government prisons is one of the many rehabilitation programmes that is aimed at providing correctional services to inmates as well as equipping them with agricultural skills. It was established that Lugore farm sits on 2,418 acres with maize grain and soya bean as the main farming enterprises; Loro farm sits on 898 acres with cotton and maize grain as farming enterprises; and Ruimi farm sits 3,300 acres with maize, soya bean, and sunflower as its main farming enterprises.

Almost all food required to feed inmates across the country is, therefore, produced by the prisons on prison farms. This has helped to reduce feeding costs on the side of Government.

His Excellency the President directed the Uganda Prisons Service to increase agricultural production through seed multiplication of cotton and maize seeds in order to supply the growing population.

The committee, however, noted that agriculture production in the Uganda Prisons Service continues to encounter a wide range of challenges such as irregular rainfall patterns due to climatic changes, continuous leasing of prison land to private developers, low levels of mechanisation, frequent breakdown of farm tractors and reliance of on manual labour provided by inmates who do not have expertise in agricultural production.

There is also lack of production systems for massive production for prison self-sufficiency.

The committee also noted that the farms lack silos for storage and a seed treatment plant, which increases the cost of seed production.

1. The Uganda Prisons Service should fast-track establishment of irrigation systems in a phased manner at prison farms in order to mitigate reliance on natural rains;
2. Government should embrace irrigation as a way of increasing agricultural production in the country
3. The committee further recommends that Government should provide funds to construct silos for storage and purchase a seed treatment plant for seed multiplication;
4. Government should provide sufficient funds for increased mechanisation as a way of increasing food production. Funds should also be provided for maintenance of available machinery;
5. The Uganda Prisons Service should partner with Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries to provide technical expertise and support in order to increase its agricultural production;
6. Under the programme of promoting water for agriculture and irrigation, and provision of tractors for mechanisation, the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries should give priority to prisons farms; and
7. With persistent food shortages for prisoners, the Uganda Prisons Service should enhance food production to cover the prisoners' feeding budget shortfalls and mitigate the persistent supplementary budget request for prisoners' feeding.

Healthcare service delivery

Healthcare services under the Uganda Prisons Service is organised in accordance with the

general public health administration to ensure that there is continuity of treatment and care of prisoners, including for HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and other infectious diseases.

As a way of ensuring the health of inmates, the Uganda Prisons Services offers specialised counselling services to the inmates as well as allowing in religious leaders to offer spiritual counselling in prisons.

The committee further noted that due to inadequate accommodation in prisons, some inmates with contagious diseases share dormitories with the rest of the inmates. This poses the risk of spreading diseases to healthy inmates. In the same case, mentally challenged inmates sleep in the same dormitories with the rest of the inmates, putting the lives of the healthy inmates at risk.

The committee was informed of inadequacy of drugs in most of the prisons health units. In all prisons establishments visited, health centres were congested, with few health workers and poor sanitation.

The committee further observed that there is inadequate emergency response to ill-health of prisoners. This is due to lack of trust resulting from the criminal perceptions of inmates by their warders, which leads to laxity, especially when sickness is reported at an early stage and they are ignored until it becomes an emergency. In addition, lack of standby ambulance services in remotely-located prisons sometimes leads to death of inmates while in transit to hospitals.

The committee recommends as follows:

1. Government should upgrade some regional prisons health centres III and IV, and health centres II to health centres III, for effective medical services in prisons and increase staffing levels;
2. The committee recommends that Government should provide regional standby ambulances to prisons as it is with the police and the military, to respond to emergencies resulting from ill health of inmates;

3. Special units should be constructed with adequate medical supplies to accommodate inmates with exclusive health conditions to avoid the spread of contagious diseases;
4. Prisons management should organise routine medical outreach teams to provide medical information to inmates and sensitise them about communicable and non-communicable diseases.

Insecurity in prisons facilities

The committee was informed that due to the changing profiles of offenders, with global increase in terrorism and changes in the sentencing regime where some people are sentenced to more than 50 years, security of both prisoners and staff needs to be enhanced.

The requirements include establishment of offender identification and management systems to facilitate offender tracking, monitoring and control critical in maintaining a secure prison environment conducive for offender rehabilitation.

The committee recommends that Government should provide funds for procurement, acquisition and installation of assorted security, communication and ICT equipment, including prisons management information systems.

Conclusion

Mr Speaker, Uganda Prisons Service operates under serious challenges as noted above, which require urgent Government intervention, especially in areas of tackling congestion challenges, addressing land grabbing, the need to put up decent accommodation for staff and providing legal aid services to prisoners, among others.

The committee would like to appreciate the services rendered by the prisons management authority in this country, despite operating on meagre resources.

Mr Speaker, I beg to lay the original report of the committee. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr Chairman. Don't you have any other document – the minutes and all that? Please, ensure the minutes and all accompanying documents are also laid.

MR MUWUMA: Much obliged, Mr Speaker. I will lay them tomorrow.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will allow you to do that because it is very important. Colleagues, you have had the chairman's submission. To be honest, I would like to give first priority to those who have not spoken. So, I request everyone who has spoken to sit. Those who came in late, I will pick on you last because I know those who have been around. *(Laughter)*

6.41

MR IDDI ISABIRYE (NRM, Bunya County South, Mayuge): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity, and I would like to thank the committee for the report. I listened to the presentation of the report as it was presented, but there are issues that we need to look into.

Among the recommendations – I looked at the committee's recommendation to give the prisons money to construct more prisons. Much as I appreciate the work of our prisons department and that we should appropriate money for the department, the idea of appropriating additional money to construct more prisons is a bit disturbing. *(Laughter)*

We have countries that are even closing prisons. Countries such as Netherlands have closed prisons. Sweden is taking the same direction. Let us increase the budget for prisons and then take another direction; how best can we decrease crime in our country? Increasing more prisons means that we are advocating for people to commit more crimes – after all, we have already settled their homes.

I do appreciate that -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, would you commit a crime because there is space available in a prison? *(Laughter)*

MR IDDI ISABIRYE: Mr Speaker, we must engage our population in productive activities. Some of these crimes are because most of our people lack what to do. We should invest in areas where we can engage our people in productive activities to reduce crime. I thank you

6.44

MS GORRETH NAMUGGA (NUP, Mawogoola County South, Ssembabule): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also thank the committee –*(A member rose_)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, she had not submitted. I am the one who knows who submitted. Hon. Hanifa submitted; Hon. Nabukenya submitted and she is the one who remained in between.

MS NAMUGGA: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for defending me –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable member from Kalangala also submitted.

MS NAMUGGA: I am submitting on the issue of congestion and crowding, with regard to housing in prisons. Mr Speaker, each one of us is aware that we have political prisoners who should not be in prison; I mean, they are there for no reason. We need to think about releasing political prisoners.

We should also look into the issue of the CIID team that does the investigations. There is inadequacy and lack of capacity within the CIID team that increases the number of people in prisons, yet they would not have been there.

Mr Speaker, the civic space is shrinking. These would have done the sensitisation, on behalf of Government. So, Government should also think about giving the civil society space to help in sensitisation and those are the duties that the civil society normally takes on.

Gender equity mainstreaming

Mr Speaker, I concur with the committee that pregnant mothers and breastfeeding mothers

should be treated in a special way. They should be given space to feed their children.

Lastly, I present on the issue of the Legal Aid Bill. Gender-based violence has increased in prisons. First of all, space, accommodation and homes. You know, this behaviour is increasing in homes. So, we need to consider increasing housing facilities for our staff in prisons, so that we can also reduce on gender-based violence. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Clerk, we are giving a maximum of two minutes. Hon. Okot, then after, you can give your UPC neighbour. *(Laughter)*

6.46

MR PETER OKOT (DP, Tochi County, Omoro): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee for bringing out the plight of the prisons sector - both the staff and inmates.

The prisons department is on the receiving end. We must ensure that the Judiciary, the prisons department and the Police ensure that there is efficiency in their work. If you look at the numbers of prisoners who are on remand, the investigations into their cases have dragged on for a long time and in the end, having stayed there for many years, you find that they have no case to answer. So, there is need for efficiency in the investigations department.

However, the committee did not consider one thing: In the last two years, there have been incidences where prisoners are transported to go and provide labour in private facilities. With the manner in which they are transported, we have registered fatalities, where prisoners lost their lives. So, I do not know how these issues will be handled. I think there should be a procedure within the prisons department.

I know, as a way of corrective measure, that some of them go and give labour, for which they are paid and at the end, when they are being released after serving their sentences, they are given some of this money to go back home with.

Therefore, there must be a clear policy that when prisoners are being transported to go and offer labour to some private facilities, there is need for decent transport means so that we do not –(Member timed out.)

6.48

MS KENNY AUMA (UPC, Woman Representative, Kwania): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the chairperson of the committee for the elaborate report.

I just want to echo something concerning the inadequate legal representation of prisoners. We are well aware that every Ugandan has a constitutional right to be heard, and at the same time, be represented. These people are faced with legal challenges of representation because they are poor and cannot afford legal fees. They are being denied their constitutional right. As we are aware, they are supposed to be given this right as Ugandans, so that they are heard.

The chairperson has talked about healthcare services in prisons. We are aware that there are people who have been arrested. Some of them are pregnant mothers; some of them have infectious diseases that can also infect other inmates. However, what they the Prisons Management Committee has is a dormitory that is meant for only the prisoners.

I implore the prisons management to separate inmates with infectious diseases from those who do not have. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

6.50

MR FRANCIS LORIKA (NRM, Moroto Municipality, Moroto): Mr Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking the chairperson of the committee for elaborately bringing out the challenges that are faced by the Uganda Prisons Service and prisoners. It is true that the biggest challenge they face is mainly poor infrastructure and limited facilities.

If you notice, recently, there was an operation in Karamoja – the disarmament exercise - and most of the suspects who were arrested during

that operation were taken to the prison facility, which could not accommodate them; so there was overcrowding.

If you carry out research, it shows that some of our prisons actually hold over 200 per cent of the capacity of those facilities. So, that issue of overcrowding also leads to some of the issues that the committee has not brought out clearly - that is the mental health part of it.

If only they could put emphasis on some of these prisons facilities, whereby they provide mental health services - because if you look at the crowding in the prisons, it causes a lot of mental illness associated with violence, and some of the inmates end up committing suicide.

So, if they can also be given counselling services, that would help them. However, we need to address mainly the issue of infrastructure, so that we are able to solve some of these problems that may escalate, into violence.

I am happy that at least the recommendations that have been made are truly clear. I hope that Government will put emphasis on implementing some of these. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I think it is important, when making recommendations, that we make recommendations on what is implementable and in line with the law because chairperson - and that is why we have all these services.

For example, on page 9, you recommend that Government should honour its obligation to provide legal services criminal offenders, as its duty. You need to qualify some of these services because this is not in line with Article 28(3) (e) of the Constitution. That one is limited to only offences for death and life imprisonment - capital offences, in short, to make it very easy.

So, when you say that as a committee, we should provide these services, then it becomes unconstitutional; you are acting beyond the Constitution. So, you need to go and revisit this.

Hon. Stephen Kagwera and then I will go to Hon. Richard Wanda. Colleagues, I am going to pick you. Hon. Kyooma, you have just come; you cannot make me panic. *(Laughter)* I will give you a chance.

6.53

MR STEPHEN KAGWERA (NRM, Burahya County, Kabarole): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee. The problem with the recommendations we give is that at times, they are not implemented.

Mr Speaker, I have been here for some time with the chairperson of the committee. The same recommendations we make –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Colleagues, I want to send you a clear warning. When I pick on you, I am not doing you a favour; it is your right. You are many here. So, whether you turn to me with a sad face or curse or do what, it does not help.

Therefore, honourable colleagues, please be like the other Members. That business of removing a mask and starting to make signs to me does not help. Please, sit - you are a Member of Parliament and I will pick on you. I have said that everyone who has not spoken will speak; and you are one of them.

Therefore, I would like you colleagues to know that indeed, you must sit here and wait like others. Sometimes you will even sit here for 10 hours and I won't pick on you. It is not because I do not like you, but because others are coming up yet my time is limited. I request that we understand each other on this.

I know some times when I leave here, some of you send me messages, "I came, and you never picked me. I stood up 20 times..." What do you want me to do? One day I will call one of you to take up my seat and when 120 people stand up, I will see how many people you will pick upon to speak. *(Laughter)*

Therefore, please, I am not being malicious to anyone. As presiding officers, we try our best to be fair. So, honourable member, take heart;

I am going to pick on you. You don't need to make any sign to me. Hon. Stephen Kagwera, start afresh with your time.

6.53

MR STEPHEN KASAIJA (NRM, Burahya County, Kabarole): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I was talking about the recommendations we make each time a report is brought here; it is almost the same report being repeated. There is no implementation, especially on congestion and overcrowding.

Mr Speaker, about rehabilitation centres for the juveniles, I would like to say that these are very limited in this country; most of the regions don't have them.

The sad point is about *–(Interjection)–* the sad point - not third, but sad point - is about the reputation of the staff houses. Actually, it infringes on the rights of the children, women and the officers themselves.

Mr Speaker, I have seen conditions where families share a uniport. So, you can imagine a family with all the children, the father and the mother are there. I can't say much about it; you know what I mean. So, people are deprived of certain rights.

Mr Speaker, regarding the prisons officers delegating their duties, especially to the people called the *katikkiros*. I wish you could see how these people count the prisoners; say when they are about to leave where they may have been working; they just get a stick and hit, one by one, while counting one, two – and on their heads. It is very bad and quite inhumane. I have watched it and it is so good that Mr Speaker, you have given me this chance to speak to it. Counting as if - not even cows - you cannot beat my cow how about a human being - 1, 2, 3 in the watch of the prisons officers.

Mr Speaker, the issue of the *katikkiros* must be revisited. If we don't have enough prisons officers, let us recruit more. They are always also *katikkiros* serving sentences *–(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Let us hear from Hon. Wanda and thereafter, you will hand over to your neighbour so that I can go in peace. *(Laughter)*

6.56

MR RICHARD WANDA (NRM, Bungokho Central County, Mbale): Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. I also would like to thank the Chairperson of the Committee on Defence for the report presented.

Prisons wouldn't exist if everything was ideal. And so, sometimes you find it difficult to say that we should increase or reduce the funding for the same.

However, let me go to my observations. From the report, I expected some recommendations on the rehabilitation process given to the prisoners. I have noted that in many prisons like Luzira, prisoners are equipped with more skills than prisoners who are in upcountry prisons. People leave prisons to a life that is worse and eventually, they repeat the vices they used to do.

Therefore, it is my prayer that we include something on the rehabilitation of prisoners so that when they come out of prisons, they are able to fit in the community productively.

Mr Speaker, the manpower that we hold, as a country, in prisons is very big. My view, which is also based on the recommendations of the committee, is that if it were possible, and the investigations could be expedited, those people would be let out to become productive Ugandans.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable chairperson, I usually hear about examination centres in prisons, but only at Luzira. What about other remand centres that have spread? Is it only Luzira? If I want to continue studying, will I have to ensure that I commit a crime, which takes me to Luzira Prisons? What priority?

6.58

MR JOHN BOSCO NGOYA (NRM, Bokora County, Napak): Mr Speaker, thank you for finally picking on me. I am so grateful for the committee and the report they have presented. I am glad that they have talked broadly about prisoners.

And, as you note, like for the case of Karamoja, just like my colleague has indicated, disarmament is on-going. And the numbers are swelling because many people are actually conscripted; they are not screened, yeah. It takes a long time for them to be screened and that is the reason there are many of them, overcrowding some of these facilities.

Therefore, I would like to propose together with a team, that we really think about these alternatives to imprisonment for certain cases. These offenders can actually contribute immensely to the country. So, we really need to be able to think about that,

Secondly, the report rightly talks about strengthening collaboration with actors in the criminal justice system to reduce the prisons population. There are certain cases that you can dispose of without necessarily taking someone to prison, and this can go a long way in reducing the numbers in prisons.

Finally, in the case of Moroto, for instance, the prison facility serves a wide area. So, you find prisoners from Napak and Nabilatuk being taken to the Moroto facility, and overcrowding becomes inevitable. I think there is need to start thinking about another prison unit to reduce on the numbers that are kept in one particular facility. Thank you so much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

7.02

MR ALLAN MAYANJA (NUP, Nakaseke Central County, Nakaseke): I thank you so much, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: And, I will complete this row. Hon. Olanya, you are on the frontbench; you will speak later.

MR ALLAN MAYAJA: Mr Speaker, I would like to talk about the congestion and overcrowding in prisons. On page five, the chairperson of the committee talks about the presence of a large number of prisoners who have been sentenced to death over the years, but have not been executed.

I need clarification on this because it is a large number; can the minister ascertain the exact number of these people who were sentenced to death? That is what I would like to know and it is intended for Members to know.

The second issue is about the recommendation made on page six in line with the law. Remands whose cases lack sufficient evidence should be given bail as prosecution gathers more evidence. And, the law under Article 23 talks about protection of personal liberty.

Mr Speaker, our honourable members and colleagues - Hon. Segirinya and Hon. Ssewanyana - we see on televisions that the witnesses who are brought to court confess that, "We have been forced - (*Member timed out.*)

7.04

MR TOM EKUDO (FDC, Gweri County, Soroti): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to add my voice to what the committee has just put forward on production. They talk about production of beans and maize, but I see as if Government has money, like it is the case with the Parish Development Model. Why can't Government put fish ponds in those prisons because we have enough land? We can have fish farming and it becomes one of the incomes for Government and also a learning centre -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: But the prisoners can also eat fish.

MR EKUDO: Yes, they can as well have a change of diet. That is why I am bringing it up, but some people may say, that is a luxury.

The other thing I would like to talk about is the issue of disappearing files. These files disappear upon exchange of money. You will

find that these files start from the police and go to court. However, the very police who are supposed to investigate are the same people who make these files disappear.

Even in court, it is the police to investigate yet they aid the process. What are we doing? I think the committee has to look into it because - (*Member timed out.*)

7.06

MS JULIET KAKANDE (NUP, Woman Representative, Masaka City): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I thank the committee for the report. When you consider the 339 increase as being reported in comparison to the original number, which was expected, it is embarrassing.

Many of these prisons were established very many years back. By that time, the Ugandan population was not as big as it is presently. As such, I am of the view that we should allocate more funds for renovation and construction of other prisons so as to fight the problem of overcrowding.

Another thing is, we can borrow a leaf from some systems that are being used in some countries, which have experienced such problems. For instance, in Kenya, the report has indicated that delays in the judicial system are one of the causes - (*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I would like to pick on colleagues who have not spoken, but have been here.

7.07

MS VICTORIOUS ZAWEDDE (Independent, Woman Representative, Nakasongola): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to appreciate the chairperson for the good presentation to this House. I would like to submit about overcrowding and congestion in prisons. It is true prisons are overcrowded, but sometimes the policemen and the courts cause this. Some people are arrested because of minor cases, which would not cause one's arrest. However, what is the cause? Sometimes, if you fail to get in touch with the policemen, they push you to court from where you go to prison.

Another issue is about delays in remand. Sometimes people are arrested and they take long to be produced in court for the hearings. This causes overcrowding in prisons.

When you go to prison stations that are around the lakeshores - For example, we have the Fisheries Protection Unit that is over punishing the fishermen on the lake these days. If these people fail to pay something little, they are arrested, taken to the police and directly to court, where they are not given a fair hearing. That is why they take long in prisons and the prisons become overcrowded.

My prayer is that a fair hearing should be granted to these people who are arrested. Thank you.

7.08

MR ISAAC MODOI (NRM, Lutseshe County, Bududa): Thank you, Mr Speaker. First of all, one of our colleagues is very sick; Hon. Rose Obigah, the Woman Member of Parliament for Terego. I hope that you will pray for her.

Secondly, I would like to thank those who compiled the report and I concur with my colleagues. The problem is that the prisons services are on the receiving end. If only we could operationalise the LC courts, some of those petty cases would not find themselves in the mainstream police. However, these courts are avoided and at times overlooked. Like my colleague said, they arrest somebody on petty cases. You find that very many people are in prisons without even being heard on issues, which can be handled in the communities.

I would like to commend the prison management; they have done commendable work. In fact, they are in production. They are skilling most Ugandans in prison. What we have to do is to emphasise the point of a visiting Justice going to prisons to find out; one, the condition of the prisoners; and two, how to reverse some cases. Through consultation with the Judiciary, you may find that some of these matters do not require someone to be in prison.

Another one, which is really disturbing, is the issue of the Land Commission giving out land for prisons. They are trustees for our land. However, you can imagine giving away institutional land, which has been there from time immemorial – *(Member timed out.)*

7.10

DR BHOKA DIDI (NRM, Obongi County, Obongi): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. First is the issue of congestion, which has a public health connotation. There are studies that are being carried out in this country, that show that because of the congestion in the prisons, there is an increase in the rate of tuberculosis. Therefore, de-congesting the prisons becomes important with a short-term, medium-term and long-term plans, which I support in the recommendations.

Second, is about the prisons health services. Prisoners and prisons staff have a right to health services. Unfortunately or fortunately, I served as a district health officer and I had two prisons; Olia and Adjumani. Because of the limitations in the prisons health services, we had to take up the cost of providing medicines and treatment for the prisoners.

I recommend that there has to be collaboration between the Ministry of Health and the prisons health services to improve access to health services. Related is the need for isolation wards within the prison for contagious diseases.

Finally, on access to judicial services, and delays in dispensation of justice. The issue I am raising here is in the new districts that have a limited number of police, prosecution and judicial services. I would like to strongly recommend that the Ministry of Justice – *(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Sorry, honourable member. I said I would clear Members in that corner, who have been around.

7.13

MR SIRAJ EZAMA (NRM, Aringa County, Yumbe): Thank you, Mr Speaker. This issue of accommodation in prisons is very critical and we need to consider it. In many cases, people taken there do not have anything to sleep on; they are just dumped there. What they share there is not catered for. The sleeping facilities are not washed. They are very dirty and they find themselves contracting diseases, which they are not supposed to.

By virtue of being in prison - nobody wishes to be in a prison. There are circumstances that force a person to go there, which are beyond that person's control. Therefore, we need to take keen interest and ensure that prisoners are given fair treatment in the prisons.

The 48-hour rule should be clearly stipulated so that when a person is taken there, the person is heard. The person who is not supposed to be there should be given the opportunity to go home. This is because others are kept there, but at the end of the day, you find they have no case to answer.

There is also a scenario created when –
(*Member timed out.*)

7.15

MR SOLOMON ALINGA (NRM, T'oo County, Bukwo): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Like the saying goes, we are all candidates for prisons. Therefore, we should not make prisons a torture chamber.

I come from Bukwo. I would like to thank Government for constructing a prison that is relatively good, though it does not have all the required structures. Government has also constructed courts, but the problem is that the prisons and the courts are almost 15 kilometres apart. When these prisoners are brought to the courts, they have to travel on foot with handcuffs for 15 kilometres.

Mr Speaker, that is torture; we, therefore, request Government to provide transport for offenders so that they do not over disturb the magistrates. Otherwise, these magistrates

waste a lot of time waiting for these prisoners to come.

Mr Speaker, water is life. In my district, there is no water in the prisons. The prisoners travel almost five to six kilometres to fetch water. I pray that Government takes water closer to these prisons so that our people can access –
(*Member timed out.*)

7.17

MS JACINTA ATUTO (NRM, Woman Representative, Kapelebyong): Thank you, Mr Speaker. First of all, I would like to thank the committee for the comprehensive report they have presented. My concern goes to the agricultural production, which is being affected by climate change. As you may be aware, climate change is one of the effects and challenges that have affected the world. Its impacts are far-reaching and devastating to countries that are less resilient, Uganda inclusive.

Most of us are engaged in agriculture. When you have a project, like a school or hospital, you need to food near you. Therefore, Government should have acted a long time ago to have irrigation schemes in these prisons farms so as to solve the problem of food insecurity and to also have a resilient farm.

When there is drought, you can irrigate the crops. You can mechanise the ploughing of land, other than using the prisoners to dig dry land, which is not proper.

The other issue I would like to raise is the need to have prisons facilities and courts of law at least in each and every district. In my District, Kapelebyong –(*Member timed out.*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Colleagues, if I have pointed at you, you need to be quick so that we move.

7.20

MR MOSES OGWAL (NRM, Dokolo North County, Dokolo): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Let me take the opportunity to -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: This man was a senior expert at the Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU), so we can benefit a lot from him.

MR MOSES OGWAL: Thank you. I would like to take the opportunity to congratulate you for taking up that seat because I have never had the opportunity to do that. Congratulations! *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am about to retire. *(Laughter)*

MR MOSES OGWAL: I hadn't got the chance. Mr Speaker, on the issue of prisons - I love that it is a prisons service. Prisons service is very important because we should concentrate on correction-related activities to support the prisoners to come out better than they went in. If we are going to support them, it should become a quasi-skilling institution so that we can have the best out of them.

If they have gone there for agriculture, do not engage them on only large-scale production, like my sister said, "production by hand." Help them to see how they can do livestock farming; how they can grow things like cabbages and so on, so that when they come out, they can become assets to the community.

Lastly, there should be a follow-up and mechanism to support them. For example, if they come out of prison, you can follow them up to see how best to help them carry out food production; poultry or something else. They should be followed up so that they become better people in society *-(Member timed out.)*

7.21

MS FLORENCE NEBANDA (NRM, Woman Representative, Butaleja): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I would like to join my colleagues to thank the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs for a good and comprehensive report.

Uganda is deemed to be among countries on top of the list in having the highest number of inmates with over 55 people in capacity. As a

country, we need to look for workable solutions, both short and long term. I would like to thank the committee for the recommendations they have made. I am going to make a few amendments and maybe edit a few.

In my constituency, it is true we need more judges. Why? In a week, we could have three panels, but they have to listen to 40 criminals and 26 offenders, which is very impossible. Therefore, I support the issue of having more judges in place.

I support the issue of more infrastructures. However, they have not stated clearly which kind of unit; small or big. Since the rate of crime is rising each and every day, I recommend that they make the prisons units a bit bigger to accommodate the offenders, in order to save money in future.

Also, another way of reducing criminals in prison is that we could use the option of plea-bargaining and reduce sentences on petty cases. It would help a great deal in reducing the number of prisoners. As we push for bail, we could also consider that. Thank you very much.

7.23

MR GERALD NANGOLI (NRM, Elgon North County, Bulambuli): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I would like to add my voice in thanking the chairperson of the committee and his members for the great report.

My observation is on the increase in criminality. In most cases, the intelligence officers (IOs) investigating these matters are to blame. They tend to delay the cases, even when a case can be concluded within 24 hours, simply because you are not "cooperating" - they call it "cooperation". *(Laughter)* Even if it is just a minor offence that needs you to be given a bond, they will push it to the prosecutor and the State Attorney to ensure that you are prosecuted even when it is something that could have been sorted out between the two parties involved.

The offenders end up being pushed to Mutufu and various prisons, which causes

overcrowding in prisons. Of course, we know that there are those major cases, where we say the matter should be taken to the State Attorney for perusal and advice so that the files are sanctioned.

However, once you fail to “cooperate”, I want to assure you *-(Laughter)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable. It seems Nangoli refused to “cooperate”. *(Laughter)*

7.25

MS MARGARET ALEPER (NRM, Woman Representative, Kotido): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also want to thank the committee for this good report and to echo a few issues concerning the Uganda Prisons Service.

The concern that I have is about the inadequate housing for the staff and prisoners. Kotido Prison is one of the oldest we have in this country. In fact, it has dilapidated structures – the walls are almost collapsing.

The point in case is when they attempted to break into the armoury just because of the weak and poor structures that the prison has. It has a chain link fence – of I do not know how many years back – with patches. This can be an avenue for prisoners to escape.

I think Government should pursue the idea of low-cost housing since prisoners are engaged in brick-making and Government can cover the rest of the costs.

Mr Speaker, many of our prisons are also filled with cattle thieves – as my colleagues said before – and they are not screened. I have some prisoners from Kotido – who are cattle thieves – and have been in Moroto Prison for over three years, but they have not even been presented before court. I think this is because of lack of information that they need to have legal representation.

I think it is important that Government screens these cattle thieves because we cannot have chicken thieves there and *-(Member timed out.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Chemutai?

7.27

MS PHYLLIS CHEMUTAI (NRM, Woman Representative, Kapchorwa): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs for the very elaborate report that they have presented.

I am one of those who visit prisons every year in Kapchorwa. What they have mentioned is true about prisons, except for some few areas, which are special to Kapchorwa.

They said there was a lot of land for prisons in the whole of Uganda, and that prisons farms are the biggest. In Kapchorwa, our land is very small. Therefore, I call upon Government to buy for us land that can be used as a farm.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Others are complaining, but you want more digging ground. *(Laughter)*

MS PHYLLIS CHEMUTAI: Yes, we want more digging ground, especially to be used for projects such as poultry, tailoring and so forth because this is what is lacking for the inmates in Kapchorwa Prison.

They also talked about inadequate staff quarters. This is very true. What we have done of late, in Kapchorwa, is that we have hired a hydraform machine, which has helped in construction of staff quarters. It has done great work.

I implore Government to use the same method and introduce hydraform machines in every prison facility so that the staff quarters can be constructed. I discovered that in prisons, the majority of the offenders are the youth *-(Member timed out.)*

2.29

MR XAVIER KYOOMA (NRM, Ibanda County North, Ibanda): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I take the pleasure to thank the chairman and the committee for the report, which is very elaborate.

I would like to comment on the issue of imprisoning the juveniles together with the adults. While the committee was informed that it was intended to restrict the spread of COVID-19, to me, it was actually a catalyst to spreading COVID-19. This is because the committee, in its report, notes that imprisoning the juveniles together with adults led to congestion.

Mr Speaker, in addition, when you imprison juveniles together with adults – some of these adults are hardcore criminals – there is a danger that these adults will brainwash and indoctrinate these young people, who will eventually become a problem to the community.

Mr Speaker, I recommend that these remand homes be decentralised and regionalised. In addition to Naguru Remand Home and Kampiringisa, they should be regionally distributed.

Mr Speaker, I also want to talk about land grabbing. While it is true that some people have grabbed prisons land, other dubious people are the prisons to grab people's land. There is a case in my constituency, where a one Okware placed an announcement - *(Member timed out)*

7.31

MR TONNYAYOO (NRM, Kwanja County, Kwanja): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the committee for the report. According to section 5(a), (b), (c), (d) and (e) of the Prisons Act, 2006, the Uganda Prisons Service is supposed to keep those who have been detained, in humane and safe custody, and produce them in court at a time when they are required. The service is also supposed to facilitate the social rehabilitation and reform of prisoners through specific training and education.

Now, this is what the committee went to investigate. However, from the report, you realise that they are keeping prisoners in congested facilities, where there is mistreatment; and they are not producing them in court from time to time when they are required. It shows that what is provided

by the Act is not being followed – including rehabilitating them.

Mr Speaker, I think the point here is that for us to implement this Act as a country, we need to invest in prisons service so that it becomes a place where people are rehabilitated and supported so that when they get out, they become better people than when they went in.

Mr Speaker, looking at the cost-benefit analysis, it is only prisons such as Luzira and others, but the village prisons are a real nightmare; they are places of torture, where the rights of the inmates are not respected.

So, we would like to call upon the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and specifically the Uganda Prisons Service, to support them with more resources so that they expand the infrastructure, including that on farms, so that instead of digging from morning to evening using a hand hoe, they are kept with - *(Member timed out.)*

7.33

MS RITA ATUKWASA (Independent, Woman Representative, Mbarara City): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the committee for the good work they have done.

I note that the prisons are congested with offenders of domestic violence, as well as of sexual and gender-based violence, who are the majority because Government has not invested in preventing the vice. If all the defilers and wife batterers ended up in prison, the crisis would be much bigger. So, I think as appropriators, it is wise that we rethink - with the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development - the investment to prevent gender-based violence.

In addition, I applaud the committee for endeavouring to expedite the Legal Aid Bill. This Bill is very important for women, youth and those categories, that end-up in prison unjustly.

Therefore, I would like to re-echo that Government should ensure that legal aid services are extended countrywide, especially to women who are cohabiting and widows,

among others in regard to property rights, so that they are very well defended where it occurs.

Otherwise, I thank the committee for the good work done. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Gilbert Olanya is representing the Shadow Minister for Internal Affairs - from the report I got. Two minutes.

7.35

MR GILBERT OLANYA (FDC, Kilak South County, Amuru): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to implore the chairman to extract the resolutions made on prisons, for the last four years.

We have been discussing prisons and the resolutions were passed. It appears Government is not taking these matters seriously. Parliament passed a resolution on the night soil bucket system, prisons farms, congestion and many other issues..

Mr Speaker, I would like to implore you; let the Parliament you lead be an action-oriented Parliament; what Parliament resolved should be implemented. We have inmates who have taken more than 10 to 15 years on remand. They have never been produced in court. While other inmates are in prison on a minister's orders. When we visited Luzira Maximum Prison, we asked them - they have taken 20 years under the minister's orders, and they do not know what is going on.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, do you have a list of those members?

MR OLANYA: Yes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: So, can you lay it on the Table tomorrow? You see, I would like the *Hansard* record to be clear: When you say there are prisoners who are in prison on the minister's orders; a minister of the Government of Uganda - So, tomorrow, I will give you an opportunity to lay the list on Table because

if you do not, then we shall have you go and retract. *(Interjection)* No, I will not expunge; he will have to retract.

MR OLANYA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. What I am telling you is the truth because I was on the Committee on Defence and Veteran Affairs and I am in the Shadow Cabinet.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Tomorrow, after my communication, I will give you an opportunity to lay that list.

MR OLANYA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Let Government take this matter seriously. And more so, many people are being arrested on minor offences. For example, many inmates coming from my district Amuru and in Acholi subregion are being arrested on land matters. Upon reaching Kampala, they change the case to treason.

As I speak, many are rotting in Kigo Prison. They are being tried by Court Martials yet they were arrested on land matters. Many were arrested six years ago and right now, they are in Kigo Prison. So, let Government take this matter very seriously. We can decongest prisons very easily, but we are only not willing to do it. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable colleagues, since these are your constituents from your area and you have their details, I would also request that you lay their list here so that we can help.

The ones who were arrested on land matters, but are now charged with treason, for six years they are in prison, it will be very important for us to intervene as a House. That is my major - Leader of the Opposition. *(Members rose)*

Colleagues, I made it very clear. Our staff have families and I have been seated here since 2.00 p.m., but I would like everyone who has waited to be given chance to speak. And each one of you who is in this House today, has spoken, which is crucial. *(Applause)* I know how I am - apart from those who -

7.39

MR JOHN BAPTIST NAMBESHE (NUP, Manjiya County, Bududa): Thank you, Mr Speaker. What is of grave concern and which hon. Olanya has alluded to, in every other report, that if you were to go through all the reports, those of us who have been around for some time are either the same or similar. And the issues raised are actually the same.

So, I invite you, with all due respect to your Office, to prevail over the line minister to furnish this House with an action-taken report; kind of a treasury memorandum. This action-taken report should be detailing –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member, it should not be “a kind of”; it is provided for under our rules - rule 220 provides for a report.

MR NAMBESHE: Actually, it should detail the actions taken on the recommendations that have been made by this House rather than having to repeat this over and over again.

Mr Speaker, the report decries the transportation of - how expensive and time consuming it is to transport inmates, when in this 21st century, they could deploy the electronic court sessions. We have seen it; it should not be intensified because that could minimise the expenses or rather the hurdles that come with transportation of prisoners.

I remember in 2016 when His Excellency the President - actually through his directive, Parliament started allocating funds to farming - and in the report it is vividly clear that of all the institutions we have in this country, Uganda Prisons Service has the largest acreage of land; and for that reason, they were tasked to start production of cotton. They pledged after of course, the allocation of Shs 9 billion - I remember, and this Shs 9 billion in incremental terms, has been released every other financial year.

Dr Byabashaija made a pledge - and he is on record. He made a pledge to produce one

million bales of cotton per year, but this is not happening; it has failed. Even production of food, not only for the prisoners, but surplus food for the rest of the country, has also failed. One, therefore, wonders - Why I even take issue with this report, is that it is so silent about these funds.

What could be happening with these funds? You mentioned irrigation and all these –

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Nambeshe, as the Chief Opposition Whip, you have Members on this committee. You should ask them. I deployed you on this committee. Why isn't this in the report? Did you submit it and they refused? Where is the minority report? If you did - we shall not fault the committee leadership just for the sake of it, when we deployed members. You need to hold your members accountable.

MR NAMBESHE: Most obliged. And, for my whipping system, I do not announce, but I have already started whipping them. These should have generated a minority report. As a matter of fact, I would like to find out why it has not come out.

Mr Speaker, the State used to have what they term State briefs - I have been consulting with some of the legal gurus here - whereby Government would facilitate lawyers to go to these prisons. This helped to actually decongest the prisons. This stopped. It was there in Obote's regime. I do not know why this administration, close to four decades, could not borrow a leaf from this. This would have helped to reduce the crowding and congestion that we actually have in the prisons. With those remarks, Mr Speaker, I beg to submit.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. These are some of the alternative proposals, which would be interesting if they came from the Opposition side. If that can help, I do not see why Government - there are very many people who are languishing in prisons because of lack of guidance. Some of them do not know their rights. Some of them do not even know their time.

I will allow hon. Lilly because there is something she wanted to clarify from an ethics point of view. Hon Lilly, on Thursday last week, we had an issue here, which required the Minister for Internal Affairs to link up with you. It was raised by Hon. Gorreth Namugga; about a certain concert where they are attracting children and youth, and it is called *Zzina Sosh*. She was concerned. When she shared, we were all concerned.

These *bivulus* - concerts coming up, where you meet very many young people around Lugogo, teens drunk, smelling drugs and smoking; and they are cleared by authorities because there is no one who can hold a concert without clearance from authorities. Please, Gen. David Muhozi, link up with him on that - and we said you should report to the House on what action you have taken. We will be glad if you followed up. He referred it to you.

7.46

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR ETHICS AND INTEGRITY (Ms Rose Lilly Akello):

Thank you, Mr Speaker. I got that information and we are investigating it; we shall bring a report to the House. It is not only my ministry that is getting a lot of reports; and for others, we have gone head-on with my technical staff.

We have even gone as far as arresting some of them. When I bring the report here I will need the support of the House. The morals of this country are decaying and we all need to put our hands together to fight moral decay in this country.

I would like to comment on two issues about the report. I would like to thank the chairperson and the committee for the report. I am going to comment on immoral behaviour. In this report, I have not seen any statement or concern raised by the committee about immoral behaviour in the prisons, yet we have reports that there is a lot of homosexuality and lesbianism in the prisons. The committee members and the chairperson have not reported anything. I wonder whether they got it from the field or they did not get any report on that.

I remember, Mr Speaker, in the Ninth and 10th Parliaments, I was on this committee. The Leader of the Opposition and my brother Gilbert, were on the same committee too. We discussed and debated this, but it is unfortunate that we have not seen any action being taken. I pray that the committee works out on especially the immoral behaviour. It is there and I pray that in the recommendations, they include it.

I remember in the Ninth Parliament we spoke -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable, you can propose a recommendation which we shall adopt.

MS ROSE LILLY AKELLO: The recommendation, which was even in the Ninth Parliament, which we debated in this very House was that inmates should be given their conjugal rights and the prisons service would work out a way the spouses would visit *-(Applause)-* to visit their spouses in the prisons, in order to avoid this kind of immoral behaviour of lesbianism and homosexuality.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Why are women clapping the most? *(Laughter)*

MS ROSE LILLY AKELLO: Mr Speaker, it is not only the women who are clapping. My brother there was clapping the most -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I said the most.

MS ROSE LILLY AKELLO: You are aware of what is supposed to be taking place. Mr Speaker, the conjugal rights, if given to these spouses in the prisons, would also reduce this immoral behaviour or control it completely. We really -

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, honourable minister, conclude.

MS ROSE LILLY AKELLO: I hope I am protected, Mr Speaker? I would like to implore the committee to take it up as a recommendation because these prisons are for all of us. They are not only for the inmates. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: The minister has proposed that we allow conjugal rights. Should we include it in the report? Colleagues, this one is good for the evening; we are tired and so, we needed to lighten up.

Honourable minister, is there something you want to say? The Minister for Internal Affairs left the Chief Whip with an obligation to ensure that he makes some responses.

Minister for Defence first and then the Chief Whip.

MS ROSE LILLY AKELLO: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also want to thank the committee that is doing oversight on the Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and all the agencies that handle matters of security in this country.

I would like to thank them for their good report. We have most of these recommendations that have been made specifically for prisons. Therefore, I will only answer one issue that was cross-cutting. The issue of production, and basically, that is agricultural production. Looking at cases of food insecurity that the country is suspecting, Government of Uganda through the agriculture ministry has engaged the defence ministry as the chief of production, and the defence ministry has encouraged the National Executive Corporation (NEC) to join prisons and the National Animal Genetic Resources Centre (NAGRIC) to take on large production, specifically for this season.

These institutions have already been given funds to engage, specifically in production of maize, soya beans and beans. I noticed that many Members raised it; and so, I felt that I should raise it because Government has already acted.

Secondly, on issues of the Fisheries Production Unit, which is under Ministry of Defence, the major mandate of this unit is to protect our water bodies from being over exploited. Indeed, in the process of protecting them, they normally come across some of the suspects that are arrested - I cannot call them criminals

since they are simply suspected to have been involved in immature fishing because it is not their mandate to keep these people, they forward them to the police to take legal action.

Therefore, we are going to work together with our sister security organ, that is the police, so that when we forward these people to them, they expedite the legal process, so that they do not keep them too long in the prisons without being tried.

Those are the few issues I thought I would answer. I thank you for the opportunity.

7.55

THE GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP (Mr Denis Obua): Thank you, Mr Speaker. On behalf of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, where I was delegated to hold a brief for the Minister of State, Gen. David Muhoozi, I would like to thank the committee for the report containing the findings and recommendations to Government.

Regarding the challenges contained therein; congestion in prisons, land grabbing, indecent accommodation and the issue of minor cases all raised therein, as Government, we have not sat on recommendations made by this Parliament. As you may be aware, we have started progressively the long march to review and revamp our correctional services.

We are here talking about recruitment of judges. I think less than two weeks ago, His Excellency the President presided over the swearing-in ceremony of an additional 16 High Court judges to add to the existing ones.

This Parliament allocated more resources for the recruitment of magistrates. I am aware that so far, we have recruited over 100 magistrates, and created more magisterial areas where these magistrates will be deployed, because justice delayed is justice denied.

These are some of the recommendations that we have worked on. On the issue of prisons, just like the Minister of State in charge of Veteran Affairs has stated, we have a plan to

transform prisons farms all over the country into production centres.

The Minister of State for Agriculture, on behalf of Government, is touring the whole country. He has been to a number of districts, and is still visiting a number of districts because Cabinet took this decision that we must transform prisons farms into production centres.

We even have a plan to make them part of the skilling programme or part of the reform process. I know that this will not only help to offset institutional costs, especially in feeding inmates, but will also generate income and contribute to national food security.

Therefore, we have not sat - maybe the expectations of Parliament in terms of our pace are not the same, but all the issues here combined point to one thing: more resources, and these resources are scarce.

Kindly accept that we are making progress. It may not be at your pace, but progressively, we believe that as part of these ongoing reforms, we shall also need to encourage communal or community services for some offenders; and Members have mentioned minor cases.

The Justice, Law and Order Sector (JLOS), has also brought in a number of reforms and plea bargaining is one of them. When you stand and admit, you can be sentenced to a caution or community work. Those are part of the reforms that are coming.

Mr Speaker, there is one issue you specifically raised, on which I consulted; why the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB) centre is only at Luzira. I consulted with the Secretary of UNEB and this is what he stated. One, UNEB centres are demand-driven. That means, if you know there is a demand, you request. He said, the Uganda Prisons Service requested for two centres at Luzira prisons and UNEB granted them.

He went ahead to state that if there is another request, it request can be considered and more centres created. I beg to submit. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable member. Colleagues, this is good information we have managed to get, especially on the issue of more judges being appointed. I think in our next phase, the Government Chief Whip is to match it with state prosecutors because there is a clear mismatch.

We have the judges and magistrates, but there are no state prosecutors. I happen to have attended a few meetings with the Director of Public Prosecution when I was the Chief Whip, and I assure you that you will find that critical gap.

The judge and magistrate will come, but a state prosecutor will not be available because there are very many districts. If we could support Government effort on that, we would have given the Justice, Law and Order Sector (JLOS) a very strong boost, which would help us handle most of these cases that we have.

Colleagues, we have done justice to this report, and it is very important for us now to put the question so that this House adopts the report of the Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs on field visits to Government prisons and prison farms with the proposed amendments. I put the question that the report of the committee be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Report, adopted.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: You have heard the concern raised by Hon. Gilbert Olanya, the Leader of the Opposition and other Members, including Hon. Tonny Ayo. We have been passing most of these resolutions, but under our leadership in the 11th Parliament, the issue of the action-taken reports is going to be taken seriously. Otherwise, there is no reason for us to sit here up to this time. *(Applause)* So, the Minister for Internal Affairs will be required, in three months - because they need time, colleagues - to come back here and present a report on the action taken, as per rule 220.

Also, chairperson of the committee, these are issues you need to follow up. Otherwise, you will continue compiling reports and in the end, you will not see Members getting interested in your business, if they do not see changes. So, I am glad.

I would like to thank you for being patient up to this time. This should not be the habit of ending Parliament at 8.00 p.m., but I wanted to wait so that colleagues are given the opportunity.

Colleagues, Communication from the Chair and matters of national importance will be stopping at 3.00 p.m., so that we go to substantive business on the Order Paper. Today, we finished completed items after 4.00 p.m. If we had been on time, then it would mean that we would have concluded the Order Paper, but now, you can see we have one item we have not completed.

Secondly, I will stop receiving matters of national importance at 1.00 p.m. It is very important that when these matters come, they are passed on to the Government Chief Whip, the Chief Opposition Whip and the Leader of the Opposition for preparation. The chief whip should be able to share these matters with the ministers, so that they attend.

That helps us avoid situations of a minister coming and presenting a statement, which clogs our Order Paper and suffocates Members' and Government's business. As you can see on our Order Paper, we no longer have many questions to do with ministers' responses to A, B, C and D because they come here and explain. It is not good to clog the Order Paper. We should have a lean Order Paper.

Has the honourable Minister for Ethics and Integrity gone? Oh, you are still here. What we agreed upon here was: We are not interested much in your report here. The Member's prayer was very clear. The concerts should only go on with your guidelines. So, we want to know whether you have made guidelines.

These are matters - I do not know investigations. Adverts are going on. The organisers are

providing phone numbers and; they are doing this and that. Then you bring a report when the concert is done and we start lamenting. Let us be proactive and move forward.

Finally, colleagues, I have said I will stop receiving matters of national importance at 1.00 p.m. That means I will also stop meeting Members at 1.00 p.m. I would like to make it very clear, because when you come and you are very many - you remain in - I find that I have to come to the House past 2.00 p.m., yet I should be here at exactly 2.00 p.m.

I need time to read, I need time to meet the Government Chief Whip and the Leader of the Opposition so that we reconcile the business coming here. I also need time to meet the committee chairpersons, once they have an item on the Order Paper, to agree on how it will be presented. I need time to prepare, so that I can preside over the House in a better way. This is all good for efficiency and how we do business.

I would like to thank you for standing with us until late. I would like to thank the technical bench, the Sergeant-At-Arms and everyone who has been with us till late, but this habit of finishing business at 8.00 p.m. has to stop. I hereby adjourn the House to tomorrow at exactly 2 o'clock.

(The House rose at 8.07 p.m. and adjourned until Wednesday, 17 August 2022 at 2.00 p.m.)